ELEMENTS
OF THE
HISTORY OF FRANCE,

TRANSLATED FROM THE

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BY THE

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ELEMENTS

OF THE

HISTORY OF FRANCE.

CHARLES V. *surnamed the* WISE.

THE new king, whom we have seen take the reins of government during the imprisonment of his father John, became now a pattern for monarchs, and the restorer of the kingdom. His wisdom did all. Ill health prevented his appearance at the head of an army. He could not go through the fatigues of war; but he understood mankind; and from the retirement of his closet, could bring things to a happy issue, by the hands which he employed to recover what his fathers had lost by their imprudence. One of his first cares was, to confirm the civil officers in the exercise of their respective employments; for sovereign authority ceased on

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the death of a king, and the magistrates were no longer continued in their offices without the consent of his successor.

Charles the Wicked, the most perfidious and turbulent of mankind, had again taken up arms to maintain his pretensions on Burgundy. The king gave the command of the troops to Bertraud of Guesclin, already celebrated under the late reign. He was a knight of Britanny, of a tried courage, who had spent his youth in quarrels that were always determined by a battle. There is a little anecdote told of him, which shews the small hopes his friends had of him in his younger days. His mother used to say, there was not a more vicious boy in the world. 'He is,' says she, 'for ever fighting, and his father 'and I should both be glad he was under 'ground.' The world often judges ill of young people from passions, which, properly directed, may tend to good. Under this turbulent behaviour, a principle of heroic virtue lay concealed, which was very soon afterwards displayed in the salvation of France. The troops of the king of Navarre were commanded in Normandy by the captal or lord of Buck. Guesclin sent to offer him battle; but as the captal waited for a reinforcement and would not quit his post, which was inaccessable, this general

general had recourse to artifice; he made a shew of decamping; the enemy was desirous of pursuing. De Buck represented in vain, that Guesclin was not a man likely to fly before them, and that he only designed to deceive them by a stratagem. They drew him on to an engagement in spite of himself. The French wheeled about and faced them, animated by these words of their chief: 'For the honour of 'God, my friends, remember you have a 'new king of France, and that his crown 'will be this day presented to him by your 'hands.' They gained a complete victory, and confidence and courage again appeared in the nation. Charles V. as an acknowledgment for this important service, gave the county of Longueville to De Guesclin. Merit thus rewarded, always produces emulation.

War had continued in Britanny from the year 1341. Charles of Blois and the count of Montfort disputed the property of this duchy. They tore the country to pieces by their divisions; but at length agreed on sharing it. The countess of Penthievre, wife to Charles, niece and heiress to the old duke, mortified by this compromise, wrote to her husband, reminding him, that she had always conjured him to defend his inheritance, and that, being in arms, he ought

ought not to have given up any part of it. 'I am but a woman,' added she, 'but 'I would rather lose my life, or two 'lives, if I had them, than consent to so 'shameful a bargain.' This prince having for his wife the most tender affection, chose rather to violate his word than displease her; and the parties determined to finish the dispute by a battle. The king, who favoured Charles of Blois his cousin, as Edward III. supported the count of Montfort, his son-in-law, sent Guesclin to his assistance. Charles would not hearken to the advice of this great man, but rashly charged and was killed in battle. An accomplished prince, if he had not shewn too much complaisance to the haughty humour of his wife. Montfort wept over his corpse. 'My lord,' said the famous English general Chandos to him, 'you could 'not have your cousin alive, and enjoy 'the dutchy both: thank God and your 'friends, that things are as they are.' Charles had the glory of making Guesclin prisoner, who submitted to him, covered with wounds, after having overthrown a great number of his enemies. This battle of Aurai put Montfort in the possession of all Britanny. Whatever desire the king might have to revenge the cause of the countess of Penthievre, he preferred the public

public good to the satisfying of private resentment. He took the office of a mediator to make peace, and received the homage of the new duke, whom he had reason to fear would make a dangerous enemy. He also made peace with the king of Navarre, on his signing a treaty to renounce all pretensions to Burgundy, Champagne, and the Brill.

The people now seemed to have a right to breathe: but disbanding soldiers is unchaining tigers. They had scarcely enjoyed the peace, before the companies again began their pillage. A great number of lords and knights put themselves at their head, and the kingdom would have fallen a prey to these furious men, if Henry of Transtamare had not offered to take them into his pay, against Peter the Cruel his brother, the king of Castile, who was, by his avarice and tyranny, grown hateful to his subjects. They resolved to confide the enterprise to Guesclin. Chandos demanded a hundred thousand livres for his ransom; the king paid forty thousand, and the pope and Transtamare furnished the rest. Nothing now remained but to prevail on the companies to depart. Guesclin went in search of their chiefs. 'We have all done 'enough to damn our souls,' said he to

them; 'though you may boast of having 'done more than I have; but let us now 'quit the devil, and do honour to God.' Then mentioned other advantages which were more likely to weigh with them; the profits of their expedition, two hundred thousand livres from the king of France, the immense treasures of the king of Castile, and the contributions they would raise in the pope's dominions; for an expedition to Avignon had for them powerful attractions, they having already enriched themselves there; and the knight making no scruple of urging them by this motive. The treaty was concluded without trouble, and the chiefs came and saluted Charles V. who regaled them in a magnificent manner. John of Bourbon, count of Marche, received the title of general, with orders, in every thing, to follow the counsel of Guesclin.

The companies took the road to Avignon, not forgetting to extort money from Urban V., who then probably repented of having contributed towards the enlargement of the French hero, who was indeed the most irreproachable of all the knights; but who was far from being exempt from the faults of his profession. He was scarcely arrived in Castile, with Henry of Transtamare, before the whole country submit-

submitted to them. Peter the Cruel, being dethroned, took to flight, and went to Guienne, to implore the protection of the prince of Wales: that hero, generous and thirsting for glory, flew into Spain, and gained the battle of Navarette, where Guesclin was again made prisoner; the tyrant was re-established, and gave the greatest proofs of ingratitude. Don Pedro did not long enjoy this change of fortune. The prince of Wales, on his return to Bourdeaux, sent home Guesclin, whose ransom was paid by the king. Henry of Transtamare, seconded by the knight, returned to attack his brother, whom he killed with his own hand, and became peaceful possessor of Castile. When brothers are enemies, they are generally mortal ones; but there are few examples of a hatred carried to such a furious height as this.

The employment of the companies in a distant part of the world, procured a calm to the kingdom, of which it had great need. Charles dedicated it entirely to the good of the state. Taxes were reduced; money was brought to its standard value; agriculture revived; commerce was encouraged, and the capital adorned. France once more flourished, and by degrees prepared to recover its lost glory. They were on the point

point of entering into a war with England, for which there were undoubtedly very justifiable reasons. The prince of Wales, who had received from the hands of his father the principality of Aquitaine; under which name was comprised Guienne, and the neighbouring provinces; very soon exhausted his finances by the great magnificence of his court. The noblest souls are sometimes corrupted by prosperity. He resolved, contrary to the advice of the brave and prudent Chandos, to lay a general tax on all the estates in his dominions. Almost all the nobility were provoked at being subject to an oppression which they had never felt during the French government. The greater part of the lords of fiefs complained to the king. Independant of this attempt on their privileges, Edward III. intoxicated by his victories, had rendered English government odious to them, by withdrawing those favours which he had before lavished upon them. All circumstances seemed to lead to a rupture. The prince of Wales had been consuming by a slow fever ever since his expedition to Spain. His father was carelessly slumbering on the lap of prosperity, and the treaty of Britanny had never been executed in the essential article of renunciations; so that the lords of

Guienne

Guienne might ſtill be looked on as the vaſſals of the crown.

The appeal alſo was received. The prince of Wales was cited to the court of peers, to render an account of the grievances alledged againſt him. To this citation he haughtily replied, 'That he would 'willingly come to Paris, but that it 'ſhould be at the head of ſixty thouſand 'men.' Several infringements made on the treaty of peace, vindicated Charles in taking up arms againſt Edward. War was declared when it was leaſt expected by him. This great politician had loſt his foreſight, by giving himſelf up to dangerous faſcinations of fortune. The French arms had almoſt every where the advantage. The king felt his ſuperiority; and not heſitating to uſe the right of a ſovereign, he pronounced in the court of peers, an arret of condemnation againſt Edward and the prince of Wales, who were declared rebels, and the lands which they poſſeſſed in France confiſcated, as a puniſhment for their breach of fealty.

In the mean time, the army of an enemy landed at Calais, ravaged Artois, Piccardy, and Champagne, and even reached the gates of Paris. During theſe incidents, Gueſclin arrived, having been ſent for by the wiſe monarch, who offered him the

conſtable's ſword. Every one applauded this choice, The knight, whoſe humility did him more honour than all his other qualities, conjured the king to confer the firſt office in the kingdom on a man more able to fill it. Charles rejected theſe excuſes, and intreated him to accept it, ſaying, 'That he did not believe there was 'either prince or baron in his kingdom, 'who would not be ready to obey him; 'but if he was miſtaken, and ſhould find 'ſome of contrary diſpoſitions, he would 'make them feel his juſt indignation.' We may ſee in this inſtance, how much true greatneſs there is in perſonal merit, and how truly a king honours himſelf by honouring it in his ſubjects. The king's intreaty was in fact a command. Gueſclin obeyed; but ſtill fearing that dangerous envy which is always to be found in courts, he endeavoured to guard againſt it, by beſeeching his maſter not to give credit to any reports which might be made to his diſadvantage, without firſt deigning to hear his defence.

Charles had recommended it to the conſtable, not to run the hazard of a deciſive battle; but an experienced general knows how to interpret the meaning of his prince, and to regulate his own conduct as circumſtances require. Gueſclin, with a very

ſmall

ſmall army, marched to the enemy, attacked their different quarters, and beat and diſperſed them wherever they were found. The fortune of the Engliſh was no better by ſea, where they were vanquiſhed by the Caſtile fleet. The following campaign produced ſtill more conſiderable advantages; Poitou, Auris, and Xaintonge, returned to the French government. In vain did Edward fit out a terrible armament, with a deſign to come in perſon and repair his loſſes. He ſtruggled nine weeks with contrary winds, and was obliged to return to his ports. He was mortified, and diſappointed; and ſpeaking of Charles in the bitterneſs of his vexation, ſaid, 'That no king was ever leſs 'armed, yet none had ever given him ſo 'much trouble.' In theſe critical circumſtances, he attempted to detach the king of Caſtile, Henry of Tranſtamare, from the French intereſt, to which his fleets had been of great ſervice. The king of Navarre, always ready to injure and deceive, took charge of the negociation. But the Caſtilian replied, 'That the moſt advan'tageous offers ſhould never tempt him to 'be unfaithful to his allies.' He remonſtrated to the king of Navarre in ſuch terms as would have made him bluſh, if a ſoul, hardened by guilt, could have been

ſenſible to the language of virtue. Edward ſucceeded better with the duke of Britanny. Montfort openly declared himſelf in his favour. The king, who, in all his ſteps, obſerved the rules of juſtice, ſent him an order to fulfil the duties of a vaſſal. On his refuſal, Gueſclin had orders to attack him. The Britons naturally hated the Engliſh, and the duke increaſed their averſion, by exacting a tyrannical tax. He was very ſoon deprived of his dominions, and reduced to ſeek an aſylum in England.

Of all the conqueſts of Edward, there remained only Calais. The prudence of Charles V. the activity of the conſtable, and the zeal and courage of the nation, had wrought this change; which gained the king more real honour than his enemy received from the victories of Creſſey and Poitiers. It is eaſy to take advantage of ſuch extraordinary good fortune; but it is very rare to find ſuch ſtrength of mind, as can enable a man to triumph over adverſity. The popes often attempted to reconcile theſe two rivals; ſhewing themſelves the fathers of the chriſtian world. All that Gregory XI. could obtain was a very ſhort truce; during which period Charles made that famous ordinance, which fixes the time when kings come

come of age, at fourteen. He knew from ſad experience, how injurious to the public good, a long minority is. From the time when the cuſtom was eſtabliſhed under the ſecond race of fighting only on horſeback, with exceeding heavy armour, the king's coming of age was fixed too late; becauſe a prince who could not bear arms, was not judged capable of managing the ſtate.

During the time that the king was adored by his people, the archbiſhop of Rouen, Philip of Alençon, a bloody prince, engaged him in a dangerous quarrel. Charles demanded a prebend of that church for an eccleſiaſtic whom he had taken under his protection; and not being able to obtain it, he ſeized the temporal poſſeſſions of the prelate. This indulgence of his reſentment was very injudicious. The archbiſhop, ſtill leſs moderate, put the kingdom under an interdiction, flew to the pope for protection, and made a league with Charles the Wicked, aſſuring him, that he would take the field in perſon, and fight with the ſame ardour as any other knight or layman. In ſome reigns, this rebellion would have been followed by the moſt fatal conſequences; but the wiſdom of the government ſtifled the ſeeds of diſcord, and the ſeditious prelate ſuffered only

only the diſgrace of having undertaken a criminal enterprize.

The death of the prince of Wales was a terrible ſtroke to England. The French alſo regretted an hero no leſs amiable by his virtues, than revered for his warlike qualities. Never was a ſon more reſpectful, nor a conqueror more modeſt. It was imagined, that his death would have made Edward wiſh for a peace. The king of France, who, by his œconomy, had amaſſed vaſt wealth without exciting murmurs from his people; had built thirty-five large ſhips of the line, and an infinite number of leſs veſſels; and who found himſelf in a condition to undertake any thing, propoſed conditions truly advantageous to the vanquiſhed: nevertheleſs, the Britiſh miniſters would not accept of them, without firſt conſulting their maſter. On their return to England for that purpoſe, they found him dead. This great prince had reigned fifty-two years. Too much ambition expoſed him to loſs and diſappointments. He expired, abandoned by his ſubjects, in the hands of a miſtreſs, who thought only of enriching herſelf by his ſpoils. Richard II. ſon to the Black Prince, ſucceeded him.

The truce being ended, five French armies ſpread terror in different places. Charles,

Charles, at the beginning of his reign, could hardly muſter twelve hundred men. What a prodigious change was this! but perfidy purſued even him, notwithſtanding his great power, and the ſucceſs of his undertakings. If there ever was a ſoul formed only for guilt, it was that which animated the king of Navarre. His chamberlaine and ſecretary, being arreſted on ſuſpicions which were but too well grounded, diſcovered the whole plan of his projects. They found ſufficient proof of his having formed the deſign of poiſoning the king. Almoſt all his fortified towns being ſeized, he fled into England, and delivered Cherbourg, the ſtrongeſt place that was left him, into the hands of the Engliſh. Breſt had likewiſe been delivered up to the ſame power, by Montfort: and thus were they made maſters of the beſt ports in France, Calais, Cherbourg, Breſt, and Bourdeaux.

This was the epocha of the famous ſchiſm of the Weſt, which, through the cloſe connection that ſubſiſts betwixt the church and ſtate, threw them both into confuſion. The popes, from the year 1308, had reſided at Avignon. Our kings found their advantage in it, though the exactions of the apoſtolic chamber ruined the clergy of France. Gregory XI. in 1376, transfer-
red

red the papal feat to Rome, at the intreaty and by the advice of St. Catherine of Sienne, a nun, whom the Florentines had employed in this affair. He died very foon afterwards in Italy, where he had already repented of refiding. The cardinals affembled at the conclave. The people loudly demanded a Roman pope. The archbifhop of Bari, a Neopolitan, was elected, and proclaimed. Every thing feemed tranquil: fix cardinals who refided in France had confirmed the election; but the new pope, Urban VI. acknowledged by the facred college, rendered himfelf odious by extreme feverity and indifcreet behaviour. The cardinals retired, declaring their election forced; and therefore null. They then elected at Fondi near Naples, Robert, fon of the count of Geneva, who took the name of Clement VII. Urban put to death, in the cruelleft manner, feveral cardinals, who unfortunately fell into his hands. Clement, on his fide, took to arms, and breathed out anathemas. Both parties cut each other's throats with implacable fury. Never did ambition produce in the church fuch great evils.

The king confulted and deliberated a long time before he could decide between the two competitors; at length he declared for Clement. The univerfity, who were before

before the friends of Urban, conformed themſelves in general to the ſentiments of the court. But ſeveral of its members inſiſted upon continuing neuter till it ſhould be decided by a council. This was the moſt prudent determination, and it afterwards prevailed; but we ſeldom take the right ſide of the queſtion till we have proved from experience the inconvenience of the other. Catherine of Sienne, whoſe revelations made a great noiſe throughout all Europe, acted a part ſufficiently ſtriking, in writing to all in favour of Urban. The king received from her a letter, where the Clementine cardinals were treated as devils incarnate. His holineſs was no longer looked upon as infallible, and his remonſtrances were diſregarded. The Engliſh were zealous Urbaniſts, for no other reaſon but becauſe the French had embraced the contrary party. Clement, overpowered in Italy, endeavoured to eſtabliſh himſelf in Avignon: and this ſchiſm laſted forty years, which gave infinite ſcandal.

The greateſt men are liable to errors, and Charles the Wiſe committed one, which embittered the latter part of his reign. The duke of Britanny, who had been deprived of his poſſeſſions, and was a fugitive in England, appeared to him to be

be a victim which it was very eaſy for him to offer up, and his courtiers flattered him with the proſpect of reuniting that dutchy to the crown. He knew that the enmity of Montfort was irreconcilable, and reſolving to puſh him to the laſt extremity, he cited him to the court of peers, without obſerving the legal forms. He had no notice of the time of adjournment, nor any letters of ſafe conduct. The king himſelf impleaded his vaſſal, and determined on confiſcating his lands. The lords of Britanny formed an alliance to prevent the execution of an arret, which they looked on as contrary to the laws and rights of their country. The ſame people who had before been active againſt Montfort, made a quick tranſition from hatred to the ſtrongeſt attachment, chuſing rather to obey a duke of Britanny than a king of France. This prince renewed his treaty with the Engliſh, returned to his dominions, and was received there as a deliverer. The king was much embarraſſed by this unforeſeen determination: he had gone too far to retreat; but he made but a feeble ſtand, and the few troops which he ſent, had no ſucceſs.

It was now that Bureau of Riviere, an inſidious courtier, bleſſed with a happy addreſs, abuſed the royal favour, by inſtilling

ſtilling into the king's ear, ſuſpicions to the prejudice of Gueſclin, inſinuating, he had favoured the duke of Britanny. Charles wrote a letter reproaching him with it. This was wounding the honour of a hero in the moſt tender point. It is ſaid that Gueſclin returned the ſword of conſtable in reſentment. This great man was raiſed ſo much above the reach of envy, that princes and great men crowded to defend him. The king acknowledged his error, and looked on it as his duty to make reparation. The dukes of Anjou and Bourbon made it their buſineſs to find out the conſtable, and perſuade him to return to court, who, with ſome reluctance, complied. He was employed in an expedition to the ſouthern part of the world. He conjured the king when he took leave, to make peace with his countrymen the Britons, from whom France could draw a powerful aſſiſtance, if neceſſary. Charles aſſured him he would think of it, and endeavour to take the means. This was the laſt time that Gueſclin ever ſaw his maſter; being ſeized with a mortal diſeaſe as he was beſieging a fortreſs of Auvergne, he there finiſhed his glorious race, recommending to his officers, never to treat as enemies, artificers, women, children, or old men; and teſtified his repentance for having,

having, in his youth, ſometimes deviated from that rule. The beſieged Engliſh paid a kind of homage to his ſhade. They had promiſed to ſurrender to him, if they were not aſſiſted by a certain time. When that term was expired, the commander, followed by the garriſon, threw themſelves at the feet of the corps, and laid the keys of the fortreſs on the coffin. His tomb in the church of St. Dennis, which is the burial place of our kings, is a valuable monument of the gratitude of Charles V. The moſt celebrated captains who had fought under his orders, Cliſſon Sancerre, and Couci, refuſed the ſword of the conſtable, which they thought themſelves not worthy to bear after this hero. Cliſſon, however, accepted of it, in the commencement of the enſuing reign. He was brother at arms to Gueſclin. This fraternity in arms conſiſted of an aſſociation of either two or ſeveral knights, who bound themſelves in a ſtrait union to defend each other againſt all who ſhould attack them, except the princes to whom they were ſubjects or vaſſals. This treaty was ſometimes accompanied with religious ceremonies, and ſometimes ſealed with the blood of the knights, which they drank with their wine. The ancient manners of the Scythians ſeemed to have travelled into this kingdom.

Though

Though the Britons had ſued for a peace, and Charles was diſpoſed to grant it, yet Montfort having made a new league with the king's enemies, negociations were dropped, and hoſtilities were continued. An Engliſh army penetrated into Champagne, where it made dreadful ravages: but Charles adhering to his firſt maxims, would not venture a deciſive battle. 'Let the Engliſh take their own 'way,' ſaid he, 'and they will deſtroy 'themſelves.' The French, under the command of the duke of Burgundy, burnt with impatience to engage; but the ill health of the king ſuſpended the execution of their deſigns. He had been poiſoned in his youth by Charles the Wicked; a German phyſician ſtopped the effect of the poiſon, by opening his arm, and then ſaid, 'that whenever the wound healed 'he would die.' His prediction was verified. Charles percieving his end approach, foreſaw the ſtorms to which his ſon, who was yet but young, would be expoſed; he took all poſſible precaution to prevent it, and would have ſucceeded, without doubt, could prudence prevent ill-fortune.

The kingdom loſt a maſter, who ſeemed to live only for its good. He uſed to ſay, 'He knew no happineſs in royalty, but 'that

'that of making others happy.' This prince, as Mr. Henault obſerves, deſerved an eulogium which ſhould ſerve as a leſſon to all kings; which was, 'That though 'no prince ever aſked advice more, or 'ſuffered himſelf to be governed leſs, the 'political, moral, and chriſtian virtues 'were all united in his perſon.' A man of quality having once held an indecent diſcourſe before the dauphin, he baniſhed him his court, ſaying, 'That nothing 'ought to be ſo much attended to as the 'bringing up children in virtue, that they 'may, in the end, excel, in purity of man-'ners, thoſe whom their birth has ſet 'them above.' His taſte for letters ſtill heightened his glory. He often repeated theſe words: 'The clerks cannot be 'too much honoured, if they make them-'ſelves maſters of that true knowledge 'which they ought to poſſeſs; for as long 'as wiſdom is encouraged in this kingdom 'it will continue in proſperity; but as 'ſoon as ſhe is diſcarded, it will fall to 'the ground.' He is looked on as the true founder of the royal library. King John had hardly left twenty volumes; but he had got together nine hundred, among whom were very few good authors of antiquity: not one copy of Cicero; but ſeveral books of judicial aſtrology. This abſurd

absurd science, the offspring of gross superstition, was then in the highest reputation at court. In these days began the unbroken chain of our poets. The historian Froissard made verses; poesy was flat and low till Dante and Petrarch had made in Italy a brilliant opening. Poets, in those days, passed for sorcerers, in the mind of many people, and the inquisition made war against them. Several universities established in the kingdom, cultivated the sciences, always full of errors. Those of Paris were so considerable, that in an assembly held on the occasion of schism, there were found ten thousand agents, who had a right of voting. Pope Honorius, in the beginning of the thirteenth century, had forbidden the learning of civil law, for fear this necessary study should turn them from theology. It was owing to this cause that they delivered themselves up to the canonical law, which was a certain road to preferment, and which often carried theology along with it. Clement VII. was no friend to the theologists; saying, 'He looked on them 'as visionaries, filling the scholastic part 'of the world with subtilties.' The confusion was still greater in the jurisdiction which the children of the choir of Puy in Velai exercised, as judges of the Jews, condemn-

condemning them to pay fines. In order to reſtrain military licence, he forbid ſoldiers leaving the army without the permiſſion of a ſuperior officer; nor were they ſuffered to force citizens and peaſants to raiſe companies, without an expreſs order. The game of hazard was forbidden, as were likewiſe tennis, billiards, draughts, quoits, &c. to make way for the long bow, the croſs bow, &c. which were of more ſervice to people who bore arms. The uſe of artillery became frequent in theſe ſieges. Some attributed this deſtructive invention to Roger Bacon, an Engliſh cordelier; others to Berthwold Schwarts, a German one; but the certain epocha cannot be fixed. It is an undoubted truth, that the Chineſe were acquainted with the fatal ſecret of powder a long time before it came into Europe, to change all the order of war, and make knighthood fall to the ground.

CHARLES VI.

THE name of Charles VI. brought with it every ſpecies of misfortune with which France could be overpowered. Ambition, avarice, diſcord, the ſpirit of cabal and rebellion; every unruly paſſion ſeemed leagued with fortune to ruin the ſtate. Thoſe whoſe duty it was to have ſupported it, became its moſt dangerous enemies. At this period, hiſtory is nothing more than a continued ſeries of events, where we may learn to deteſt vice, by groaning over the evils which it brought on our country.

Charles was only in his twelfth year. The dukes of Anjou, of Berri, and of Burgundy, brothers of the late king, and the duke of Bourbon, his brother-in-law; the firſt already odious by his violence and oppreſſion; the ſecond, more moderate, but inconſtant and trifling; the third, one whoſe ſhining merit covered a well directed ambition; the fourth, full of ſolid virtures; had, all at once, a conteſt on the ſubject of the regency. Of right it belonged to the duke of Anjou; but Charles V. fearing his character, had taken meaſures to limit his power. This prince ordered

dered by will, that the king ſhould be anointed in ſome months; that till then the duke of Anjou ſhould govern in quality of regent; and after the anointing, Charles ſhould be declared major before age, governing in his perſon by the advice of his four uncles. This ſhort regency gave the duke of Anjou an opportunity of ſatisfying his inſatiable avarice. He ſeized the treaſures which had been amaſſed by the œconomy of Charles the Wiſe. Far from leſſening the ſubſidies, according to the dying orders of this good king, he increaſed them; and thus ſowed the ſeeds of ſedition, the effects of which are ſo terrible after the coronation. The people of Paris came inſolently to demand the ſuppreſſion of the taxes. The court appeared to yield leſs through reaſon than fear. The firſt ſteps ſometimes decide the authority of government. Encouraged by this ſucceſs, the rebels grew more audacious. They demanded the expulſion of the Jews, pillaging houſes, and committing innumerable exceſſes: a ſmall beginning of the diſorders which afterwards followed.

The Engliſh had the advantage through theſe troubles to eſcape the dangers which threatened. Nothing hindered their retiring into Britanny; but the Britons, as

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ſpirited againſt them as reſolute not to ſubmit to the French government, put their duke under the neceſſity of coming to terms with France. Montfort made peace on condition of being reacknowledged duke of Britanny, and being put again into poſſeſſion of his confiſcated lands; engaging to pay to the king two hundred thouſand franks to defray the expences of the war, and to aid him either for or againſt any other power, eſpecially the kings of England and Navarre. After this treaty, he made a ſecret proteſtation againſt the agreement he had entered into: a ſingular means of ſetting himſelf free from ſcruples, and reſerving the right of breaking his word. He went to Paris to aſk pardon and do homage. This being a league homage which engaged the perſon in this manner, that the dutchy, and he who belonged to it, ſhould, upon failure, incur the cenſure of felony, the duke pretended, that he owed nothing more than ſimple homage; the court was ſatisfied to receive it in general terms, and it was paid according to ancient cuſtom. Thus ended a war famous for nothing more than for ſeveral ſingle combats, wherein the French knights had conſtantly the advantage over the Engliſh. There was not any thing better adapted to the

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taste of knight-errantry than these kind of battles, which, in reality, decided nothing, and were of no other use than only to illustrate the names of a few champions.

The duke of Anjou, the adopted son of Jane queen of Naples, had no other thought than that ensuring to himself the possession of the kingdom, and sacrificing France, where his quality of first prince of the blood gave him the principal authority. Closely united with Clement VII. he shared with him a part of the ecclesiastical estates, which became a prey to the greedy avarice of the court of Avignon. All was not enough to satisfy the rapacity of this prince: though he was master of the treasure of Charles V. which amounted to above a hundred and seventy millions of our money, yet he endeavoured to renew the taxes which had been recently taken off; by this means, adding to, rather than lessening the grievances of his country. These fresh exactions caused fresh insurrections. Paris and Rouen set the example. The populace gave a loose to their fury, while several of the citizens suffered in silence. The seditious, in order to have a chief, drew from his prison Hugh Aubriot, the provost of the merchants, who had filled the capital with useful monuments, and whom they had condemned

demned as a Jew and heretick, becauſe he had reſtrained the ſtudents of the univerſity in their licentiouſneſs, who were often guilty of the greateſt crimes. Father Daniel paints him as a villain who deſerved the fire; Mr. Villaret, as a depraved friend of the public. The uſe which Aubriot made of his liberty, ſeemed to ſpeak for him. Inſtead of putting himſelf at the head of the rebels, he went to Burgundy, eaſy, lively, and tranquil. The exceſſive fury of the rebels daily increaſed. The abolition of aids and aſſiſtances was a ſecond triumph, and a new ſtroke for debaſing the authority of government. At length, the duke of Anjou gave up the direction of the ſtate to the duke of Burgundy; for the duke of Berri was too weak, and the duke of Bourbon too mild, to counterbalance his power.

A general inſurrection of the Flemings reduced the count of Flanders to implore the protection of the king. The duke of Burgundy, his ſon-in-law and heir, had a perſonal intereſt in defending it. The war was carried on with ſpirit. Charles VI. was deſirous of putting himſelf at the head of his army. The Flemings, under the direction of a ſon of the celebrated Barneville, braved danger and death. They were courageous, but undiſciplined;

plined; ſo that well managed troops could not fail of conquering. The battle of Roſbec was nothing more than a maſſacre of theſe unhappy wretches; we are aſſured, that no leſs than forty thouſand of them periſhed, while the French did not loſe fifty men. All Flanders, except Gand, was ſoon overcome. Courtray willingly ſurrendered, and the king ſojourned there. He had no ſooner left the city, than it was delivered to the fire and ſword; ſome ſay by his orders, and others, through the natural impetuoſity and reſentment of the French, at the ſight of the gold ſpurs which the Flemings had preſerved as monuments of the ancient battle of Courtray, ſo fatal to France. This atrocious vengeance ſhews the barbarity of our anceſtors.

The victory of Roſbec was not celebrated at Paris, by any demonſtrations of joy. It was now time to puniſh an obſtinate rebellious people. The king entered the city at the head of his troops. Three hundred perſons were loaded with chains, and the inhabitants were ordered to diſpoſe of their arms in the Louvre: there were found ſufficient to arm a hundred thouſand men. In vain did the dutcheſs of Orleans and the univerſity ſue for mercy to be ſhewn to the capital. Executions began; but

but with more cruelty than juſtice. The advocate-general, Deſmares, a magiſtrate of ſeventy, whoſe eloquence had often had great effect on the Pariſians, and whoſe ſervices were deſerving of the higheſt recompence; this great man was included in the number of criminals, for no other reaſon but becauſe the dukes of Berri and Burgundy hated him. The pretence for his puniſhment was, according to ſome authors, that he had not quitted Paris as other magiſtrates had, on the commotions; though he had only remained in it, to employ his credit in calming the ſedition. On the ſcaffold, he was ordered to beg pardon of the king: but this venerable old man replied, with great firmneſs, 'I have faithfully ſerved Philip 'his great grandfather, John his grand'father, and Charles his father. Not one 'of theſe princes ever reproached me 'with a crime; nor would this, had he 'lived long enough to know mankind: 'but of God alone do I demand par'don.'

Some days after this, the king declared that he would ſhew mercy to the remainder of the Pariſians, and change their puniſhment to a fine. This was a hateful alteration, contrived by the diſpenſers of authority, who dared to lead their ſovereign into

into their baſe avaricious views. Theſe fines were carried to exceſs, and the third-part of them never went into the treaſury. They re-eſtabliſhed aids, the twelfth-penny, the exciſe upon ſalt, and ſeveral other impoſitions. They deliberated if it was not in their power to render theſe taxes perpetual. Nothing more was neceſſary to reduce the people to deſpair. Rouen, and ſeveral other towns in the kingdom, were treated in the ſame manner as Paris.

The young king of England, Richard II. was likewiſe governed by his ambitious uncles, and was a ſtranger to tranquillity. The Flemings demanded aſſiſtance againſt their prince. Urban VI. publiſhed a cruſade againſt the partizans of Clement VII. Fanaticiſm heated minds already ſtirred up by diſcord. An Engliſh biſhop, known under the title of Generaliſſimo of the cruſade, in a ſhort time put himſelf at the head of a numerous army, and attacked the lands belonging to the count of Flanders, though he was attached to Urban's party. This prince was vanquiſhed; but Charles VI. revenged his death, and again drove the Engliſh out of Flanders. At length the count of Flanders ended his days, leaving his vaſt poſſeſſions to his only daughter, the wife of Philip the

Hardy, duke of Burgundy, who now became one of the moſt powerful ſovereigns in Europe.

On the other hand, Philip of Anjou, with French money, vainly endeavoured to eſtabliſh himſelf in Italy. The queen of Naples had been ſtrangled by Charles of Duras, ſirnamed the Peaceful, to whom Urban had given that kingdom. The duke of Anjou, far from revenging and recovering his heritage, ſaw his army periſh by diſeaſe and famine. He loſt a battle, and was himſelf wounded, and died in dreadful deſpair. Scarcely a tenth-part of his troops returned into France. The chief part of his lords and knights ſupported themſelves by begging on the road home. There are few examples to be found of more fatal conſequences of ambition than this; which, after having ruined the ſtate, drew the author of its ruin into new diſaſters.

Peace was the only remedy for theſe public evils; but the warm diſpoſition of Charles, rather than the unwarrantable pretenſions of the Engliſh, rendered it almoſt impoſſible. After vain negociations, it was reſolved to make a deſcent in England. The Gantois formed a conſpiracy to burn the fleet, which being diſcovered, the duke of Burgundy took the advantage of

of turning the French arms againſt the Flemiſh rebels. Such was the ferocity of this people, that ſeveral priſoners refuſed the pardon which was offered them. ‘ The king’s power,’ ſay they, ‘ is ſuffi-‘ cient, in being able to ſubject the body, ‘ but he is not able to enſlave the ſouls ‘ of the Flemings : on the contrary, ‘ when we are all killed, our bones will ‘ aſſemble, and form an army to fight.’ One of them, notwithſtanding, offered to behead the reſt, on condition his own life was ſpared. They were not only his countrymen, but ſome of them his relations, whom he thus offered to butcher. His ſervices were accepted ; he executed all, and was, in his turn, executed himſelf ; being looked on as a monſter, with whom it was meritorious to break one’s word. The duke of Burgundy alone reaped the fruits of this campaign : Flanders entirely ſubmitted to him ; unwilling, however, to acknowledge the pope of Avignon, who abſorbed, by his odious extortions, the riches of the clergy.

The deſign of attacking England ſtill ſubſiſting, there appeared, at the ſluice-gate, a formidable armament, where all the forces of the kingdom ſeemed to be united. Fifteen hundred veſſels were employed to tranſport a hundred thouſand men.

men. The king was ready to embark; but was detained by waiting for the duke of Berri: he ſent to him courier after courier; but the duke did not arrive till the ſeaſon was ſo far advanced as not to permit them to ſail. There is not a doubt but the miſcarriage of this enterpriſe was a deſigned thing; whether through jealouſy againſt thoſe who had projected it, or whether through attachment to the Engliſh, from whom, it was reported, great bribes had been received; however it was, the preparations were thrown away, and the miſunderſtanding of the princes continually increaſed the wounds of the ſtate.

This year furniſhed one great example of vice puniſhed in this life, of which there are too few inſtances. The moſt abandoned of men, Charles the Wicked, king of Navarre, periſhed in a manner ſuitable to the horror of his crimes; exhauſted by debauchery, at fifty-ſix years old, in order to renew his natural warmth, he wore a cloth dipped in ſpirits of wine; through the careleſſneſs of a valet de chambre, this cloth took fire, and he ſuffered the moſt dreadful tortures, of which he died ſome days afterwards. An Engliſhman is charged, in the year [illegible], with a deſign of poiſoning the king, the king's brother, his uncles, and the principal lords of

of the court. The villain having access to the kitchen, would have perpetrated this crime, had he not been apprehended on his arrival; perhaps on the advice of the prince of Navarre, who was as faithful as his father was perfidious. He confessed every thing. Among many extraordinary events, I must mention one more remarkable than the rest; which is, that a lawsuit was commenced against the king of Navarre, two months after his death. The peers being assembled, the chief summoner cited him to appear at the gate of the parliament-house, and at other gates; but as he did not obey, they proceeded according to form. This cause was referred and never after revived. They probably only endeavoured to confirm the title of the king of Navarre to his possessions in Normandy. It may be of use to observe, that the villany which this black wretch, Charles the Wicked, employed, never answered his end; and that, if he made the misery of others his own happiness, that diabolical happiness was often imbittered by cruel chagrin.

A third armament against England was of as little consequence as the preceding ones. The constable, Oliver of Clisson, that h[illegible]ner, in warlike atchievements, to Guesclin, a man great in arms, but vio-

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lent and avaricious, was employed in this enterprise. The hatred which the duke of Britanny had towards Clisson, made his designs prove abortive. He was desirous of marrying one of his daughters to John of Blois, whose ransom he would have paid, that nobleman being still a prisoner to the English. Montfort, who owed an old grudge to Clisson, as being of the house of Blois, no longer kept any bounds; he drew the constable to his court and sent him to prison; at the same time, giving orders to Bavalan, one of his officers, to drown him in the dead of night. The next day, awaking from his transport of fury, he felt all the enormity of this attempt, and gave himself up to despair: upon which the prudent Bavalan let him know he had not executed so unjust an order, and that Clisson was still living. He was obliged to purchase his liberty. Little reason was there, why the king should not have carried the war into Britanny, to revenge an affront which brought a reflection on the crown. The duke was going to repair to Paris; but the English expedition not taking place, was an irreparable misfortune, especially at a time when the English revolting against Richard II. were on the point of dethroning him. The impetuous temper of the king was turned against

against the duke of Gueldres, a young prince who had challenged him. He marched in person to chastise him with an eclat: he suffered himself to be appeased by a quick satisfaction, and very soon recalled his army. Such were the conclusions of all the expences and taxes by which the kingdom was exhausted. Every means of extorting money was employed. They sold to the Jews the right of ruining the citizens, permitting them for ten years to exact of their debtors interest upon interest, and forbidding any judge to oppose the abuses which they should be guilty of during that time. Their extortions amounted to near two-thirds of the principal, for one year only. These infamous usurers were driven from the kingdom in 1394, never more to return to it.

Charles VI. tired of submitting to the government of the dukes of Berri and Burgundy, to whom all the misfortunes of France were attributed, took the reins of the state into his own hands, and set the constable of Clisson at the head of the council. This change was such as might have been of advantage, had the king joined to the qualities of a good heart, those of a prudent solid understanding. He was humane, generous, and brave; but had a kind of impetuous vivacity; was

was flight, imprudent, wrong headed, incapable of reflection, and governed by his caprices. The duke of Bourbon, though ftill retained at court, had but a fmall fhare in the direction of ftate affairs: his difinterefted advice prevailed but little againft the paffions of greedy minifters, who had taken poffeffion of the young monarch: he therefore fecured the firft opportunity that offered of abfenting himfelf with honour. The Republic of Genoa fued for fuccour againft the Corfairs of Africa. The charge of this expedition was given to him. The Chriftian knights now went to fight in a country which had been fatal to St. Lewis, and very foon returned with a barren glory. They comforted themfelves, however, for the little fuccefs of their enterprife, by the pleafure of recounting their adventures. The warlike humour of the king grew ftill warmer by hearing of fuch great prowefs; he immediately refolved to carry arms into the land of the Muffulmen, 'to fulfil,' he faid, 'the 'vows of his anceftors.' There was no diffuading him from this defign, but by reprefenting that it would be better to begin by the extirpation of fchifm. He then determined to pafs into Italy, without any other motive then to fubject it by force of arms to Clement VII. His competitor, Urban,

Urban, was dying, after a military expedition: but the cardinals of Rome gave him a ſucceſſor, Boniface IX. and the church was continually divided between two parties, who were conſtantly tearing each other to pieces, under the banners of religion.

The intrigues of the court, and new incidents, very ſoon took off all attention to this Italian war. Peter de Craon, a powerful and vicious nobleman, having been diſgraced, retired into Britanny. The duke of Montfort perſuaded him, that Cliſſon was the author of his diſgrace. This was ſufficient to excite in his mind the deſign of a baſe and cruel revenge. At a time when the court was engaged only in rejoicing, on the recovery of the king from a dangerous ſickneſs, Craon ſtole ſecretly to Paris, and, with a company of aſſaſſins, attacked the conſtable in the night, as he was going from the ball. Cliſſon defended himſelf alone, till at length he fell ſenſeleſs on the ground. The murderers thinking him dead, took to flight. His wounds, however, were not dangerous; and the king, who had been pierced with the moſt lively affliction by this accident, had the conſolation of ſeeing him ſoon well, and vowed vengeance on his aſſaſſins. He ſent to the duke of Britanny

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to demand that Craon, who had taken refuge with him, ſhould be delivered up. The duke replied, ‘ That he was ignorant of the place of his retreat.’ This anſwer irritated Charles ſtill more, and he reſolved to take up arms, in ſpite of the dukes of Berri and Burgundy, enemies of the conſtable, whom they accuſed of having enriched himſelf at the expence of the ſtate (a crime which they themſelves had been guilty of). His immenſe treaſures made this accuſation but too probable. A war, undertaken merely for the private quarrel of Cliſſon, excited the murmurs of all France. They had no effect on the king, who began to march: as he was croſſing the foreſt of Mans, he, all on a ſudden, was ſtruck with the appearance of a ſtranger, dreſſed in a white robe, barefooted and bareheaded, who flying towards him with a terrible countenance, ſeized the bridle of his horſe, crying out, ‘ Advance no further; return, for thou art ‘ betrayed.’ The king's fright was not ſo great as to prevent his continuing his rout; but ſome moments after, a page who carried his lance let it fall on the helmet of another page; at the noiſe of the ſtroke, the king imagining he was betrayed, ſeemed to be ſeized with a ſudden frenzy, he drew his ſword, overthrew the pages, and ſtruck

ſtruck all that he met, till, in his rage, he broke his ſword, and his ſtrength began to fail him; they then came up, and taking him into cuſtody, he was conveyed into Mans half dead. Some believed him to have been poiſoned, others thought him bewitched; but this frenzy ſeized him only in conſequence of the heat of the ſun, (it being then the month of Auguſt) and the fright he had met with in the foreſt. He had before ſhewn ſome marks of a delirium; ſad preſages of a diſorder of which he was never cured. Boniface IX. aſſured the world, that God puniſhed the king for ſupporting the antipope of Avignon. Clement VII. and his adherents ſaid, that he was puniſhed for not having made war on the antipope of Rome. Thus they interpreted the decrees of Providence according to their own invention. Let us adore his deſigns; but let us not raſhly attempt to fathom them.

While the unhappy Charles recovered his reaſon by ſlow degrees, the dukes of Berri and Burgundy ravaged the ſtate. Cliſſon fled, and the other miniſters either made their eſcape or were arreſted; and their ruin drew after it that of their creatures. The king left them to do as they would. Every means was put in practice to amuſe him, perhaps more through po-

licy than any real design of curing him. These amusements produced a fresh calamity. The whole court were assembled at a ball, the king entered disguised like a savage, conducting five lords dressed in the same manner, and linked to each other. His brother, the duke of Orleans, indiscreetly drew too near with a flambeaux in his hand: their garments being of linen dipped in pitch, and stuck with bunches of hemp, took fire, and communicated in a moment to four of these lords. The accident was fatal. Charles saved himself by running at a distance, and the dutchess of Berri hid him under the tail of her manteau. His fits of madness immediately returned; and, by a folly greater than his own, they sent for one Guienne a magician, who engaged to cure him by a word, and who for a long time imposed upon the court, which was as superstitious as it was corrupt. The monarch remained seven months in this pitiable state. He afterwards recovered, only so far as to have intervals of reason, which were interrupted by the most shocking relapses. His reign lasted thirty years after this calamity, which was nothing more than thirty years of the most dreadful evils to the kingdom.

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The negociations of peace between France and England were continually renewed, but always in vain. The Engliſh demanded the thorough execution of the treaty of Britanny, which they themſelves had ſo badly obſerved; and the French inſiſted on the demolition of Calais, a place of the utmoſt importance to their enemies. Richard II. deſpiſed and hated by his people, endeavoured to unite himſelf with Charles. He aſked of him his daughter Iſabella in marriage. They concluded a truce of twenty-eight years. The two kings met in Piccardy, and gave each other a thouſand teſtimonies of their affection. They made an agreement to act in concert for the extinction of ſchiſm; but the royal authority was too much weakened to centend againſt the ambition of the pontifs.

Clement VII. having died of chagrin, after having ſeen a memorial, wherein the univerſity propoſed meaſures to pacify the church. The cardinals of Avignon ſigned an act, by which they obliged themſelves upon oath, every one in particular, to renounce the pontificate, when the election ſhould be made, if the majority among them, looked on this method as proper to finiſh the troubles. The cardinal

nal Peter de Lune, an Arragonian, was elected, and took the name of Benedict XIII. He immediately ratified the act which we have juſt mentioned, and his firſt ſteps ſeemed to promiſe nothing but moderation and concord: deceitful appearances, under which he veiled a fiery ambition, and an inflexible obſtinacy. In vain the king ſent to him his brother, and two of his uncles, to determine him to the ceſſion: in vain the cardinals declared, that it was not only convenient but neceſſary. The tiara had inſpired him with other ſentiments. He at firſt ſent evaſive anſwers, and concluded by a formal refuſal, without paying any regard to an oath which exacted the ſacrifice of his dignity. Boniface IX. was no leſs reſolute to die pope. At length they determined on that part, which, perhaps, they ought to have taken at the beginning of the ſchiſm: a national council, which aſſembled at Paris, decreed, that the competitors ſhould remain neuter. Conformable to this decree, the king declared he would renounce obedience to Benedict, and forbid the ſending any money out of his dominions to Avignon. The fierce pontiff refuſed to yield, and called in the Arragonian troops to his aſſiſtance. He maintained a long ſiege againſt the marſhal of Boucicault. We ſhall,

ſhall, in its proper place, take up this affair again, which is unfortunately of ſuch a nature as to leſſen the reſpect for ſpiritual power, with thoſe who have the injuſtice to confound the uſurpations of man with the ſacred rights of the church.

The marriage of the king of England with Iſabella of France; Breſt and Cherbourg evacuated, and ſold to Charles VI.; the ruinous expences of Richard II. who oppreſſed his people, and diſſipated their treaſures, raiſed a nation againſt him, who were always terrible in their rebellions. This prince was deſirous of governing as a tyrant. The young duke of Lancaſter, his couſin-german, a hero full of ambition, took advantage of theſe circumſtances to dethrone him. Richard vanquiſhed, ſhewed himſelf the moſt cowardly of men. They publickly tried him, and he acknowledged himſelf unworthy of the ſcepter. The uſurper kept him in priſon, where he was aſſaſſinated; and this violence appeared to the Engliſh only an act of juſtice. Henry IV. (that was the name which the duke of Lancaſter took on him) enſured to himſelf, firſt by his policy, and afterwards by his cruelty, the enjoyment of a kingdom acquired by guilt. The court of France made haſte to negociate with him. It made ſome ſecret attempts for

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cover Guienne, which Henry ſaw without concern. ‘ Neither the Bardelois nor the ‘ Baiennois,’ ſaid he, ‘ will ever turn ‘ againſt us: they are free and quiet; ‘ were they under the French dominion, ‘ they would be taxed and retaxed two or ‘ three times in a year.’ He confirmed the truce, leſs through fear than prudence, to ſtrengthen his new authority.

While England applauded itſelf for this change of government, France ſaw occaſions for grief and alarms daily increaſing. Two Auguſtines having boaſted of being able to cure the king, after uſeleſs remedies, and magical operations, ſtill more uſeleſs, having made, in the head of their patient, inciſions which redoubled his diſorder, their conduct excited ſuſpicion, they were obſerved, and acknowledged their frauds and debauches. Being interrogated from whence proceeded the king's malady, they attributed it to faſcination; at the ſame time accuſing the duke of Orleans. The impoſture was diſcovered by their own confeſſion; and they expiated their guilt at the grave. The puniſhment of theſe monks, who had abuſed the court during ſix months, proved, that the madneſs of Charles VI. was not all that the kingdom had to fear. If ſuperſtition, and a notion of magic diſturbed the imagination, the frantic

tic paſſions had gained dominion over the heart, and produced remedileſs evils.

The duke of Orleans, ridiculouſly accuſed of having bewitched the king, had really deprived the duke of Burgundy of great part of his credit. Jealouſy divided theſe princes; and they became mortal enemies. The firſt obtained of his brother the adminiſtration of the finances, and very ſoon afterwards the government of the ſtate. A freſh impoſition, which he eſtabliſhed at a time when he ſhould rather have done ſomething to have quieted the minds the people, rendered him as odious as his debauches had rendered him deſpicable. He was obliged to ſuppreſs the tax. Loud were the murmurs that were heard from all parts. The dukes of Orleans and Burgundy took to arms on this occaſion; but the people prevented the civil war. It was decided in the council, that when the king was ſick the duke of Burgundy ſhould govern. His age, his experience, the extent of his dominions, all pleaded in his favour. The duke of Orleans could not avoid ſubſcribing to a determination confirmed by the ſovereign. His reſentment was not the leſs lively. The connection which he was, with too much reaſon, ſuſpected to have with the queen Iſabella of Bavaria, contributed more than all [illegible]

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friendſhip of his brother, to ſupport the jealouſy of his rival. Iſabella governed a huſband, whom ſhe, in a ſhort time, openly betrayed, and obtained, from his ſtupid complaiſance, the power of annulling and revoking the donations which he had made, or ſhould make hereafter. Holding him thus chained, ſhe forgot all duties; her own children wanting the neceſſaries of life. Their governeſs confeſſed to the king, that they often had neither apparel or food. 'Alas!' ſaid he, 'I am no better treated 'myſelf.' We cannot help being ſtruck with horror in reading, that, for five months, he neither went to bed or changed his linen; they ſcarcely deigned to remember that he exiſted. What could the people hope from the humanity of the great, if the ſick king was not allowed any ſuccour?

The death of the duke of Burgundy left the field free to the ambition of the duke of Orleans. Already maſter of the queen's heart, he was very ſoon maſter of the ſtate, under the title of lieutenant-general of the kingdom. The oppreſſed, unpitied people poured out maledictions and reproaches againſt both. But that which was moſt to be feared by the king's brother was the ſettled hatred and cruelty of the new duke of Burgundy, John Sans

Peur, a prince who made a jeſt of religion and morality, and was wicked through taſte and ſyſtem. He demanded being admitted to the council, where his quality of father-in-law to the dauphin added to the greatneſs of his power. The duke of Orleans, who ſeemed to look upon all the riches of the nation as a prey for his avarice, propoſed a new general tax. No perſon dared to contradict it. This was a glorious occaſion for the duke of Burgundy to reconcile himſelf to the people's affections. He repreſented their miſeries in the moſt lively terms; the vices of the adminiſtration, and the ill uſe made of the finances. He offered himſelf to defend the kingdom, if their enemies ſhould attack them; declaring moreover, that he would ſoon put a ſtop to the payment of this tax in his dominions. Not being able to prevail by his advice, he retired, and was, from that time, the idol of the Pariſians. His preſence became neceſſary, and he was recalled. He returned with his troops; the queen and the duke of Orleans quitted Paris, and carried off the dauphin with them. John Sans Peur purſued them, and brought him back, for which he received the thanks of the city and univerſity. This laſt body had more power than ever, and employed it uſefully for the extinction of

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ſchiſm; but ſometimes abuſed it, by arrogating to themſelves a kind of inſpection into public affairs. The duke of Orleans once ſaid to its deputies, 'Return to your 'ſchools, and meddle only with your own 'buſineſs.' From that time the univerſity declared themſelves his enemies. It is ſurpriſing, that men devoted to the ſtudy of letters, and reſpectable through the knowledge which was then ſo rare, could not diveſt themſelves of that madneſs which drew them from their ſphere, darkening a real merit by chimerical pretenſions.

The two princes on the point of coming to battle, appeared, on a ſudden, to be truly reconciled; but the duke of Burgundy meditated the ruin of his rival, who joined to the practice of devotion the moſt abandoned libertiniſm; a monſtrous mixture, by which people keep their vices in countenance, by mingling with them an appearance of virtue. He boaſted of favours he had received from the ladies of the court, and named among his miſtreſſes the ducheſs of Burgundy, a woman of an unblemiſhed character. This boaſt was, perhaps, what ſhortened his days. Never villain better concealed the moſt infamous deſign, than did the duke of Burgundy. He had ſlept in the ſame bed with the

duke of Orleans, went to communion with him at the ſame maſs, and ſigned a promiſe of inviolable friendſhip, at the ſame time that he had been long preparing to aſſaſſinate him. The crime was perpetrated the very next day after this ceremony had paſſed between them. Some ſatellites waited for their victim in a ſtreet through which he was to paſs at night. They ſurrounded him, they knocked him down. 'I am 'the duke of Orleans,' cried the prince. 'So much the better,' replied the murderers; 'it was him we wanted.'

The duke of Burgundy was one of the firſt to teſtify his indignation at this murder; but the provoſt of Paris having reported to the council, that one of the murderers had taken refuge in that prince's hotel, he flew, diſconcerted and trembling, to the duke of Berri, and drawing him aſide, confeſſed his crime, ſaying, 'That the 'devil had ſurpriſed and tempted him.' The next day he went again to the council, but was not permitted to enter; upon which he took to flight, while fear dwelt on their minds, and that of the duke of Bourbon alone remained inflexibly bent on the puniſhment of the guilty. The only brother of the king aſſaſſinated, almoſt under his eyes, and his death to remain unpuniſhed, was an event ſuited to th[illegible]

age of horrors. What followed was no less fatal and astonishing. The duke of Burgundy, far from making the satisfaction which was demanded, dared to glory in his crime. He returned to Paris prepared for war; he entered it amidst the acclamations of the people, who sung carols before him, as at the entry of a sovereign. He got the permission of publicly making his apology. John Petit, a doctor of the university, who had been bought by the Burgundian, had the effrontery to pronounce a long discourse, in which, after having proved, by a dozen arguments, (in honour of the twelve apostles) that it was lawful for any one to kill a tyrant, he applied this maxim to the assassinated prince, imputing to him every crime which man can be guilty of. He concluded by saying, 'That 'the author of the assassination ought to be 'rewarded, by the example of the requital 'which was made to my lord St. Michael 'the archangel, for having killed the devil; 'and to the valiant man Phineas, who had 'killed Zimri.' Every word of this discourse tended to rebellion. There needed only a glimmering of reason and humanity to discover this absurd and execrable fanaticism: notwithstanding, no one dared contradict the doctor. The triumphant duke, furnished with letters of abolition, which

which the king was obliged to give, marched against the people of Liege, who had made war on their bishop. The duke conquered, and returned with his victorious army. Meanwhile, the letters of abolition had been revoked, and the queen and dauphin had been intrusted with the government during the king's indisposition: but John Sans Peur had nothing to do but shew himself. The Parisians adored him, the court trembled at him; yet, as policy demanded some reparation for a crime, of which the remembrance could not be effaced, he consented to make an excuse purely out of ceremony, and confirmed, by this light submission, a power capable of overturning the kingdom. Master of the king's person, master of Paris, which he soon thought it not worth while to treat with respect, the more he grew in power, the more the hatred of the princes of the blood raised itself against his ambition. The young duke of Orleans, seconded by his father-in-law, the count of Armagnac, undertook to revenge the death of his father. He sent a challenge to the duke of Burgundy in these terms: 'Charles duke of Orleans, to 'thou John, who callest thyself duke of 'Burgundy, for the horrible homicide by 'thee and thy common assassins, traitor-

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'ously and wilfully committed on the per-
'son of our thrice renowned lord and fa-
'ther, &c.' France was divided between the Burgundians and Armagnacs. They fought in several places. The butchers of Paris, arming for John Sans Peur, signalized their sanguinary audacity against his enemies. Several of the principal inhabitants took to flight. The same disorder prevailed in the provinces; both parties shamefully intreating the assistance of the English; for public interest was nothing, when put in the balance against private pique. An accommodation seemed to have composed these feuds, and the English were sent back; but the fury of faction, and the insolence of the butchers, whom they called Cabochiens, who received that title from Caboche, the name of their chief; the machinations of a crowd of ambitious men, enemies to peace; above all, the character of the duke of Burgundy, who sacrificed every thing to the desire of dominion: these causes combined soon drove away all hopes of a calm. This prince formed a project to dethrone the king, which being discovered, gave the court and a part of the people, a sudden abhorrence of him. Those who before made him an idol, now looked on him as a traitor and homicide. He was declared

an enemy of the ſtate; and Charles VI. marched in perſon againſt him. The duke, too feeble to reſiſt a royal army, ſubmitted to negociate. His haughty ſoul ſtooped on this occaſion. The peace was ſuch as the court could have wiſhed, or rather have hoped from two princes, who, under the appearance of union, eternally nouriſhed the ſame ſentiments of jealouſy and hatred.

The French and Engliſh had often violated the truce made for twenty-eight years; but Henry IV. had gained no advantages from the calamities of France. Surrounded by domeſtic foes, he prudently employed himſelf in reſtraining their conſpiracies. This prince being dead in 1413, his ſon Henry V. ſucceeded him; for whoſe lot it was reſerved to ſhake the foundations of the French monarchy. The conditions of peace which he offered were ſo hard and ſhameful, that they were rejected with indignation. A menacing letter written to the king, in which Henry ſtiled him prince Charles, our couſin, and an adverſary of France, ſerved for a declararion of war. Henry embarked for Harfleur, beſieged and took that city: not being able to undertake any thing more, becauſe ſickneſs had weakened his army, and his fleet had been diſperſed by a tempeſt; he there-

therefore marched for Calais, where nothing was more eaſy than to have ſtopped his paſſage. An army of ſixty thouſand ſoldiers would have forced them to ſurrender, or periſh with famine: but too much confidence often produces worſe conſequences than fear. They let him paſs the Somme, and purſued him in the plain of Agincourt, preferring the riſks of a battle to the advantage of conquering without one. The ſame faults which had been committed at Creſſey and Poitiers produced the ſame diſaſters. Though the French were four times as many as the enemy, yet were they put to the rout. The advantage of the ground, the addreſs of the Engliſh archers, the wiſdom and courage of the young king of England, their deſperate ſituation, which obliged them either to conquer or die, all concurred to make this victory ſtrikingly glorious. Seven princes, and above eight thouſand French gentlemen remained on the field of battle. The dukes of Orleans and Bourbon were taken priſoners. It is to the temerity of the people in command, and the ignorance of the conſtable d'Albert, we may attribute this public misfortune: they ſeemed to lead the army to ſlaughter. Henry V. repaſſed the ſea, being in want both of money and troops: but France had

in her own boſom, enemies of the moſt dangerous kind; ambitious princes, and corrupted citizens.

The count d'Armagnac being appointed conſtable and ſuperintendant of the finances, attempted to govern in a deſpotic manner. New impoſitions, new puniſhments! Every change in the miniſtry was a mortal ſtab to the kingdom: every ſtep taken by the great tended to tear it in pieces. While the partizans of the duke of Burgundy were preſcribed, he himſelf was in ſecret treaty with Henry V. whom he already acknowledged as king of France. The duke of Berri died: a prince cruelly avaricious, who had ruined the ſtate, and who had never done any other good than that of building churches. Two dauphins died almoſt at the ſame time, and the count d'Armagnac, united with the new dauphin, (afterwards Charles VII.) ſeized on a treaſure which queen Iſabella of Bavaria had amaſſed at the expence of the nation. This princeſs lived at Vincennes in public infamy. The king ſurpriſed one of her lovers, and cauſed him to be drowned: they then conveyed her to Tours, and kept her priſoner. Iſabella, who had, till then, been a declared enemy to the duke of Burgundy, now heſitated not to enter into a league with him againſt

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the ſtate. The duke having releaſed her from priſon, ſhe eſtabliſhed a parliament at Troys, whence ſhe iſſued her orders in quality of regent; pretending that this title, which ſhe had ſome time enjoyed, was not to be repealed. ‘ Now,’ ſays Mr. Henault, ‘ every thing in France was ‘ double, parliaments, great officers,’ &c. A traitor introduced the duke of Burgundy into Paris: his faction retook the upper part, and made a horrible maſſacre. The chancellor, the conſtable, ſeveral biſhops, many magiſtrates, with innumerable citizens, were ſtrangled. Others they threw from high towers on the pikes of the ſoldiers. The ancient Saxons could not have committed greater cruelty in a town taken by aſſault. It was thus that John Sans Peur choſe to revenge himſelf. The common executioner was put at the head of the populace; the duke was ſeen to converſe with him in the moſt amicable manner, and the executioner gave him his hand as a mark of friendſhip: a proof that the proudeſt men can ſink into meanneſs when it ſerves their paſſions.

The dauphin had eſcaped, followed by a great part of the parliament, and was not willing to return into a city where the Burgundian was maſter. The provinces were the ſcenes of civil war. Henry V. was

was the only one who reaped any advantage from theſe diviſions: he ſeized upon Normandy: it was in vain that a legate uſed every argument in his power to inſtil into Henry's mind ſentiments of peace. 'Is it not evident,' replied he, 'that God 'has conducted me hither by his own 'right hand? there is no longer a king 'in France: I have a lawful claim on this 'kingdom: diſorder reigns every where, 'and no one thinks of making a defence. 'Is not this a proof that heaven has deſ-'tined the crown for my head.' Every fortunate uſurper might uſe pretty nearly the ſame language, and the moſt atrocious crimes would be often looked on as the decrees of heaven, if we were to judge of the juſtice of actions by their ſucceſs. The king of England, in his propoſals of treaties, always rendered them impoſſible: they yielded much, and he exacted ſtill more.

In the mean time, the duke of Burgundy reconciled himſelf with the dauphin. Their interview on the bridge of Montereau, which ſeemed to promiſe a laſting peace, gave occaſion to a new crime, more fatal than the preceding ones. Scarce had the two princes met, each of them attended by ten knights, before John Sans Peur, the aſſaſſin of the duke

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of Orleans, fell covered with wounds. It is not poſſible to clear up this dreadful myſtery. Whether the murder had been commanded by the dauphin, who was yet young and of a mild diſpoſition, but eaſy, and too apt to be wrought on by others; whether the murderers had no other inducement than their own hatred, (which does not ſeem very likely) or whether a ſudden quarrel had tranſported them out of themſelves, ſuch an event could not but produce ſtrange effects. It was generally imputed to the dauphin. The queen gave herſelf up to the moſt unnatural and barbarous reſentment: ſhe joined herſelf with the young duke of Burgundy. The king of England found them at Troyes, where he made the famous treaty, by which it was decreed, that Henry V. ſhould marry the daughter of Charles VI.; that after the death of the king, he ſhould ſucceed to the crown, and, in the mean while, ſhould govern France in quality of regent; that ſeeing the incapacity of Charles, he ſhould, when he wrote to Henry, uſe theſe words: ‘ To our dear ſon, Henry king ‘ of England, and heir of France;’ and that they ſhould purſue Charles, who called himſelf dauphin, with all poſſible diligence and vigour, as an enemy to the ſtate. This was violating the rights of nature,

ture, as well as those of the nation. It was overturning the fundamental laws of the kingdom; but it was the act of a weak king, who blindly followed the dictates of a furious woman. The false parliament which resided at Paris, (to which we cannot justly give any other name, since the ancient magistrates either were massacred, or were the greatest part fled with the dauphin, while the duke of Burgundy, in the name of the king, had put in other officers, devoted to his party). This unworthy parliament declared the dauphin guilty of *lese majeste* (and consequently incapable of succession), together with his accomplices, the murderers of the duke of Burgundy. The two kings, the queen, and the sons of John Sans Peur, had been received into the capital with extraordinary magnificence. The court of Henry V. eclipsed every thing, and Charles VI. was abandoned. The proud Englishman demanded, one day, of the marshal of Isle Adam, who spoke to him with freedom, how he dared to look him in the face. 'Most puissant lord,' replied the marshal, 'it is the manner of France; 'and he who dares not look the person in 'the face whom he is speaking to, is regarded as a bad man and a traitor.' Some time after, this nobleman was conducted

ducted to the baſtile. Thus we ſee what the French got by ſubmitting to a foreign maſter.

In the midſt of this revolution, ſome citizens remained faithful to their country. The part beyond the Loire ſupported the cauſe of the dauphin: a number of nobles, ſome through zeal, others through policy, ranged themſelves under his colours. In quality of regent, he had removed the parliament and univerſity of Paris to Poitiers. Several magiſtrates, and many doctors attended them there, at the riſk of loſing their fortunes. Some advantages gained over the Engliſh reanimated their patriotic zeal; but Henry's ſuperior ſtrength and judgment, would undoubtedly have reunited the two crowns on his own head, if a fiſtula, a diſorder which at that time they knew not how to cure, had not carried him off at Vincennes, at thirty-ſix years of age. Charles VI. died two months after. Not one prince of the blood aſſiſted at his funeral. The people ſhed torrents of tears; which ſhewed their feeling in pitying, and their juſtice in not attributing to him the public calamities. His ſirname of Well-beloved diſplays the idea which they had of his ſoul. There is a little anecdote which delineates the nobleneſs of his ſentiments: an in-

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former having accused a person of speaking ill of him: 'It cannot be,' replied the king, 'for I have done that man service.' This shews the excellence of his character; but at the same time tells us, he knew very little of the human heart, or he would not have believed men incapable of ingratitude. The son of Henry V. now in his cradle, was proclaimed king of England and France.

The thread of political affairs has made us take no notice of the great western schism, the termination of which was a memorable event in this reign. By a folly which could only have subsisted under the worst of governments, the kingdom was returned to acknowledge obedience to Peter de Lune, Benedict XIII. who continually promised to abdicate, and yet still persisted to retain the tiara. His obstinate ambition alienated their minds anew, and made them return to absolute neutrality. The popes of Rome, Boniface IX. Innocent VII. and Gregory XII. were no less untractable. On both sides, they affected as much zeal for peace, as they were distant, in reality, from making any concession; the only means by which they could procure it. The council of Pisa deposed Gregory and Benedict in 1409, and proclaimed Alexander V.; but the emperor,

not willing to acknowledge this council, ſet up a third pope to diſpute with the two others the ſpoils of the church. Alexander dying, they put in his place John XXIII. formerly a corſair, who very ſoon took arms, and exacted the tenths. At length the famous council of Conſtance aſſembled, to which that of Piſa gave riſe. The emperor Sigiſmund, ſeveral princes of the empire, twenty-ſeven ambaſſadors from ſovereigns, and a prodigious number of prelates and doctors, formed the moſt numerous aſſembly of this kind that had ever been ſeen. John XXIII. appeared there. He was looked on as the only lawful pope. They, nevertheleſs, obliged him to abdicate. He very ſoon repented of this ſtep, and fled from Conſtance diſguiſed like a poſtilion. Sigiſmund having arreſted him, the council directed a proceſs againſt him. This wretched pontiff, convicted of enormous crimes, was ſolemnly depoſed, and the ſuperiority of the general council over the popes confirmed by an immutable decree. There now remained only to give a ſucceſſor to John. They elected Martin V. Gregory having ſent his renunciation. Peter de Lune was obſtinately bent not to give up; he therefore retired, and buried his dignity in a little fortreſs of Spain, ſituated on an inacceſ-

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ſible rock. The puniſhment of John Hus, and Jerom of Prague, whom they burnt to death in ſpite of a paſs from the emperor, becauſe they maintained ſome opinions of Wickliffe, the Engliſh heretic, had excited violent declamations againſt the fathers of Conſtance. They had more reſpect for the memory of the cordelier, John Petit. It was not without great difficulty that the celebrated Gerſon procured the condemnation of his apology for the duke of Burgundy, or rather the doctrine of homicide, which it contained; for they ſpeak neither of the work nor its author. Several voices loudly demanded a reformation in the church. The exemptions, the annates, the reſervations, the gracia expectativas; all theſe methods made uſe of by the popes to extend their juriſdiction, and increaſe their eccleſiaſtical revenues, furniſhed inexhauſtible matter for complaints from the univerſity, whoſe zeal, though perhaps guided by intereſt, demanded nothing more than was juſt. But reformation claſhed with the ſelfiſh views of the principal members of the council. It ended in 1418, by the extinction of a fatal ſchiſm; leaving, however, great abuſes unreformed, which had produced great evils. Men conſecrated to God were then leſs than ever exempt from the weakneſſes

of humanity; and the ſpirit of the times oppoſed itſelf to the changes which were deſired by a ſmall number of wiſe and good men.

As we are now drawing towards the epocha of a revolution in manners and government, it is neceſſary to retrace a general picture of the ſad ſtate of monarchy. During the misfortunes of this reign, the court perpetually changed its face, and the public good was entirely ſacrificed to the paſſions of thoſe who poſſeſſed themſelves of the ſovereign power. Depredations in the finances, contempt of the laws, treaſons, violence, and injuſtice, were the exploits by which the princes and nobles ſignalized their authority. The people of the army, licentious and undiſciplined, were nothing more than highwaymen, who were more terrible to their country than its foreign enemies. Almoſt all the ſoldiers ranged themſelves under the famous robber, named Aimerigot Black Head, who poſſeſſed ſeveral caſtles in the Limouſin and Auvergne. His will is ſufficient to let us into his character. ‘ I leave,’ ſays he, ‘ to the chapel of St. ‘ George, for its reparations, fifteen hund- ‘ red franks: item, to my Crum, who ‘ was faithful to me, twenty-five hundred ‘ franks: and the reſidue,’ continued he,

addreſſing

addreſſing himſelf to his officers, 'as you 'are companions, and ought to be bro-'thers, take among you as common pro-'perty; and if you cannot agree, but the 'devil will creep in among you, ſee here 'an ax very ſtrong and well ſet, break the 'ark, (the ſtrong box) and let every one 'get what he can.'

The people given up a prey to the rapacity of theſe barbarians, who often gave up their pay, that they might, with impunity, exerciſe their rapine; at the ſame time haraſſed with taxes, by which the great men and financers were the only gainers, while the king was in want of the neceſſaries of life: the people, I ſay, made ſtill more deſperate by famine and contagious diſeaſes, had loſt all ſentiments of patriotiſm and virtue; ſometimes ſtupid under a weight of affliction, and ſometimes furious in the heat of faction. The parliament, however, was a model of diſintereſtedneſs and frugality. The fees of the counſellors who were of the clergy were five-pence per day, and the laics had not ten-pence. This body of people enjoyed the reſpect which is inſeparable from merit; but it yielded, for a time, to violence; and it would have been a ſingular prodigy, if many of its members had not been ſeized with this general delirium.

rium. The univerfity likewife forgot its duty: that zeal for the public good with which it had often appeared animated, was now contaminated by a fpirit of fedition and independence. Philip Auguftus had exempted it from fecular jurifdiction: a privilege which not only extended itfelf to the mafters and fcholars, but alfo to their fervitors: eager to defend thefe injurious privileges, whenever they received the leaft check, they threatened to fhut up the claffes, and to fufpend the lectures. The credit of that foundation, joined to the infinite number of its ftudents, became a fource of diforders. The doctors made the chair refound with fanguinary maxims and cruel invectives, though the chief part fhewed a conftancy to the laws of the ftate, and the principles of religion. Science was drowned in an ocean of errors, and a fondnefs for difpute filled the place of philofophy. Is it furprifing that France, thus corrupt, agitated, and unhappy, fhould be now on the brink of ruin? Let us compare our fituation with that of our anceftors, and be thankful to heaven.

Card-playing, which was hitherto but little known, began, under this reign, to be in fafhion. It was a method made ufe of to amufe the king's melancholy. This invention, favourable to the lazy, is become perni-

pernicious to ſociety, by diſcouraging bodily exerciſes, procuring to idle people a reſource againſt the burden of time, and often plunging them into ſtill greater evils; in fine, furniſhing them with the means of ruining both health and fortune at one ſtroke. The actors likewiſe now firſt began to form themſelves into companies: the graveſt kind were called *Brothers of the Paſſions*, and repreſented the myſteries in a burleſque manner. Thoſe of a lighter claſs were called *Care-killers*, and their chief, the king of the fools: theſe exhibited ſcenes of ridiculous fantaſtical adventures. There was another ſet called *Clerks of the Sock*, who began by allegorical moralities, and joined farces to them. There was alſo a fourth under the denomination of the *Cuckolds of Normandy*, under a chief whom they called the *Abbot of the Cuckolds*, and who bore a croſier and mitre; theſe acted pieces equally ſatirical and impertinent. The ſeveral theatres where theſe pieces were exhibited, became ſchools of ſuperſtition and the groſſeſt indecency, and were indeed worthy of the taſte and manners of the nation. It was the work of ſeveral ages to draw them out of ſo ſtrange a barbarity. The French were not deſtitute of genius; but genius without cultivation produces nothing but monſters.

CHARLES VII.

THE kingdom was more unhappy after the death of Charles VI. than it had been after that of king John. A ſtranger reigned in the capital. The whole nation had taken the oath to the duke of Bedford, brother to Henry V. who was declared regent of France during the minority of Henry VI. The lawful king, whom they called Charles, the pretended dauphin, a prince of twenty, as weak as mild, as voluptuous as brave, governed by his miniſters, preferred pleaſure to the affairs which he ought to have purſued with ardour. Languedoc, Dauphiny, Auvergne, the Bourbonnois, Berri, Poitou, Xaintonge, Tourain, Orleans, and a part of Anjou, and of Maine, was the whole he was poſſeſſed of; the reſt was in the hands of the Engliſh, whoſe alliance with the duke of Burgundy ſeemed to preſage ſtill more conqueſts, equally ſudden and laſting. The duke of Britanny had embraced his cauſe, driven by the torrent againſt his own inclinations.

Charles VII. took ſome places; but the battle of Verneul, which Bedford gained, weakened him extremely. The French temerity

temerity again ſhewed itſelf on this fatal day. So many misfortunes had not ſufficiently taught the commanding officers: they knew how to fight, and yet neglected the means of vanquiſhing. A quarrel ariſing between the duke of Burgundy and the regent of France, gave the royaliſts time to breathe: they took advantage of it to negociate an accommodation with the duke of Britanny. The count of Richmont his brother, accepted the ſword of conſtable; but on condition that the king ſhould diſgrace his favourites. The monarch overwhelmed with adverſity, forgetting his duty in the lap of pleaſure, could not diſcard the miniſters who, by their flatteries, abuſed his confidence. Thoſe whom the conſtable diſmiſſed were, in ſpite of him, replaced by others ſtill leſs worthy of governing the king. The conſtable put two to death without conſidering the favour of his ſovereign, who groaned under the tyranny of ſuch a maſter, and the ſtorms of his court increaſed the danger of his ſituation. T[illegible] fo[illegible] his new favourite, very ſoon embroiled himſelf as well as Richmont, who was too abſolute and too haughty, but zealous for the ſtate. Friend and enemy, all conſpired to the ruin of a monarch, who ſeemed not willing to reign. One day, when

when he was employed in preparations for a feaſt, the brave La Hire came to take his orders. Charles having demanded what he thought of this feaſt: ‘ I think,’ replied he, ‘ that no one can loſe his kingdom ‘ more gaily.’

The ſiege of Orleans was likely to decide the fate of the monarchy. The Engliſh beſieged this place with vigour: the French as vigorouſly defended it; but the king's courage was not to be raiſed by that; on the contrary, he thought of ſaving himſelf by retiring into Dauphiny. The remonſtrances and prayers of the queen, Mary of Anjou, a princeſs of rare virtue, turned him from this cowardly reſolution; and Agnes Sorrel, his miſtreſs, reani[illegible] his drooping courage. Theſe lin[illegible] Francis I. are much for her honour.

‘ Gentle Agnes, thou meriteſt more ho-
‘ nour by having recovered France, than
‘ is due for any thing that can be perform-
‘ ed by a nun or a hermit, within the walls
‘ of a cl[illegible] cell.’

But Joan of Arc, ſo well known by the name of the Maid of Orleans, was the deſtined inſtrument for the preſervation of her country. This girl, born of poor parents in a village in the dioceſe of Toul, was only ſeventeen when ſhe appeared on the

the ſcene of action; her devotion, her ſimplicity, a lively imagination heated by a frequent recital of the horrors of the war, rendered her very ſuſceptible of thoſe extraordinary feelings which agitated her ſoul, and threw her out of herſelf: ſhe imagined herſelf inſpired. ‘ St. Michael, St. Margaret, and St. Catherine,’ ſhe ſaid, ‘ all appeared to her in her ecſtacies, to acquaint her with the decrees of God, which were, that ſhe was to deliver Orleans, and to anoint the king at Rheims.’ Her viſion went no farther. Raudricourt, the commander of Vaucouleurs, to whom ſhe confided the ſecret, looked on her at firſt as a viſionary. At length they preſented her to the king, who had her examined. Prelates, doctors, and magiſtrates, all after many interrogatories, acknowledged that there was ſomething wonderful in this girl. She was herſelf ſtrongly perſuaded of ſucceſs, and perſuaded others to the ſame way of thinking. They reſolved to take advantage of a reſource ſo unexpected. The virgin, armed from head to foot, and a banner in her hand, conducted the French army as the ſubſtitute of God, and filled them with the ſame ardour and confidence with which ſhe felt herſelf inſpired. She fought like an heroine; but was ſcrupulous of taking away life. The Engliſh were ſtruck with

with a panic, and being continually beaten, they raiſed the ſiege of Orleans. It is natural to imagine, that the generals, as well as the ſoldiers, attributed this revolution to ſome ſupernatural cauſe. The duke of Bedford ſays, in one of his letters, 'That the virgin was a true diſciple 'of Satan, and had made uſe of inchant-'ments and witchcraft.' The ſame perſon who, to the French, appeared a tutelar angel, appeared to the Engliſh a magician; and though both might be miſtaken, their opinions were not the leſs likely to produce a great effect upon credulous men.

Joan of Arc, after the deliverance of Orleans, preſſed the king to come to Rheims to be anointed; to do which he was obliged to croſs about fourſcore leagues of land which were in the hands of his enemies, with a handful of men, and totally deſtitute both of money and proviſions. Theſe were dreadful obſtacles; yet all was loſt by the leaſt appearance of irreſolution. The authority of the virgin puſhed on the moſt timid. The Engliſh were beaten at Patay, notwithſtanding the heroic efforts of the famous Talbot their general. Auxerre refuſed to open its gates; but furniſhed them, nevertheleſs, with proviſions. Troyes and Chalons

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submitted, and Rheims received Charles VII. He was there anointed; at which ceremony (so much to her glory) the virgin assisted. After which, looking on her mission as accomplished, she was desirous of retiring; but the commands of the king, and persuasions of the court, detained her. Though they were jealous of her glory, yet they found her presence useful to them; but Heaven now seemed to abandon her all at once: wounded and taken prisoner, in a sally against the enemy in defence of Campaigne, which was assaulted by the duke of Burgundy, she was delivered to the English, who disgraced themselves by punishing her for their defeats. They ought to have treated her as a prisoner of war; on the contrary, they condemned her to be burnt as a sorceress, an heretic, and an idolater. The Jacobine who performed the office of inquisitor at Paris, and the university in a body, through a scandalous fanatacism, solicited the English, in the warmest terms, to abandon her to the judgment of an ecclesiastical tribunal. Her enemies were but too much disposed to it. Cauchon, the bishop of Beauvais, their partizan, a man deserving of execration, with several other ecclesiastics and doctors, were the ministers of this barbarous injustice. The virgin made a reply which is

is greatly celebrated, when ſhe was interrogated why ſhe had aſſiſted at the anointing of Charles VII. with her ſtandard: 'It is juſt,' ſays ſhe, 'that the perſon who had a ſhare in the labour, ſhould alſo have a ſhare in the honour.' The ſentence was paſſed and executed at Rouen. It was one of the moſt ſcandalous monuments of the folly and wickedneſs of human nature. After ſeveral captious interrogatories, conformable to the genius of the inquiſition, theſe cruel divines could not convince the heroine that her viſions were illuſive, or that ſhe was not really inſpired. We know, that a tribunal of prieſts could not condemn to death; but to abandon the heretic to the ſecular power, was to deliver her to the flames. The king afterwards did juſtice to the memory of Joan of Arc, who, as Voltaire obſerves, was ſufficiently honoured even by her ſufferings. The baſtard of Orleans, that brave count of Dunois, who had almoſt always accompanied her, affirmed with oaths, in an advanced age, that all her actions had the appearance of ſomething ſupernatural in them, and had never given occaſion to the leaſt reproach. It was, doubtleſs, only in ſo dark an age as what we are now writing of, that the virgin could have executed ſuch things. France would have re-

ceived the yoke, if their reaſon had been ſufficiently ſtrong to have diſbelieved her revelations; but, in more enlightened times, they would have avoided the faults and misfortunes which rendered ſuch a reſource neceſſary.

Charles VII. beſet by Tremoille, and by his miſtreſſes, was loſt in conſtant indolence. The courage of the nobility ſupplied his defect. The conſtable of Richmont loſt not his zeal though in diſgrace: he ſuccoured Orleans in ſpite of all the commands of the court to the contrary. It is ſaid, that when the virgin adviſed the driving him back, and the nobles, more prudent, determined to receive him as a friend, according to the hiſtory of Britanny, Richmont addreſſed her in theſe words: 'Joan, they tell me that you have a mind 'to oppoſe me. I know not by whom 'you are ſent, whether by God or by the 'devil; if by God, I have no reaſon to 'fear you, ſince God is privy to my in'tentions as well as yours; and if you are 'of the devil, my reaſon to fear you is 'ſtill leſs.'

Whatever truth there may be in this curious anecdote, certain it is, that the conſtable ventured to ſeize Tremoille in a caſtle where the king himſelf had taken up his reſidence. He was the third mini-

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ſter who had experienced his violence. Charles, who was now diſguſted with this favourite, countenanced the undertaking, and received Richmont again into favour. In thus falling from his dignity through weakneſs, he had the happineſs to gain himſelf an illuſtrious defender.

After ſome years of war, where fortune ſeemed equally to balance between the royaliſts and the Engliſh, without any deciſive action which might be ſaid to fix her, Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, rendered at length that ſuperiority to the houſe of France, which his alliance with the enemies of the ſtate had made them loſe. The pride of the duke of Bedford wounded him in a lively manner. The aſſaſſination of his father had been too ſeverely revenged by the misfortunes of the monarchy: his natural generoſity intereſted him in the miſeries of his countrymen. The council of Bale ſolicited him to ſacrifice to his religion a cruel reſentment. Peace could not be otherwiſe than advantageous to him, and what could he gain by depriving his own houſe of a crown in favour of a ſtranger? He embraced that ſide which he ought to have taken at firſt. The Engliſh having rejected the offers of the king, who had been willing to yield Normandy with Guienne, he

made his particular treaty at Arras, where the ambassadors of all the Christian princes were assembled. The strongest imposing conditions on the weakest. It is said of Charles VII. that he received the law from his vassal. He there discharged him from all future homage. He disavowed the murder of John Sans Peur, and promised to pursue the assassins. In a word, he yielded all that was required; happy, at that price, to purchase a peace so desirable. The queen-mother, Isabella of Bavaria, who had conspired with the duke of Burgundy the ruin of the king and the state, died this year at Paris, being ill used by the English, reduced to the last necessity, covered with shame, and devoted to grief: a faithless wife, an unnatural mother, an enemy of France: she is a most striking example of the misfortunes to which we expose ourselves, when we contemn those duties which we ought to observe.

The Parisians, much dissatisfied with the English dominion, of which they felt both the ignominy and rigour, were desirous of returning under their lawful sovereign. The constable treated of the terms of agreement betwixt them; in which he promised a general pardon, and the preservation of their privileges. This prevailed, and they opened the gate to him: the

the English having no longer any partizans, were easily driven out. The king signalized himself at the taking of Montereau; he there began the attack like a soldier, and was one of the first who mounted the ramparts: it was exposing himself too much; but an action of this kind was, perhaps, necessary, to efface the remembrance of his indolence. It was twenty years since he had entered Paris. The people received him with triumph; and, in fine, determined, that his happiness should depend on his fidelity.

The disorders of every kind, which abounded, demanded quick redress. Charles gave his first attendance to ecclesiastical affairs. He assembled the clergy at Bourges: it was there that he made the celebrated pragmatic sanction, conformable to the decrees of the council of Bale, which then endeavoured to limit the power of the popes, and to re-establish the liberty of the church. By this pragmatic sanction, they abolished reserves, expectatives, annates; which were the rights the popes arrogated of reserving to themselves the collations of a crowd of benefices, of naming successors before they were vacant, and of receiving a year's revenue: they renewed, with great alacrity, the ancient custom of elections, which inducted the

clergy with the royal consent; they suppressed the abuse of appealing to the pope, without having recourse to the ordinary courts of justice; and in cases where appeals were lawful, they obliged the pope to appoint commissaries in their own kingdom: in fine, the superiority of general councils over the pontiffs were authentically acknowledged. The parliaments, known by the name of the pragmatic, were as odious to the court of Rome, as they were dear to the French. It was not possible to reconcile such different interests. The quarrel of the council of Bale with Eugene IV. the deposition of that pope, the schism which it occasioned for some years, properly belongs to ecclesiastical history: let us only observe, that this council, after having made such wise regulations, degenerated into a conventicle; which passionately pursued a lawful pontiff who was worthy of being the head of the church, and which abused that authority by which it had set bounds to the pontifical power. When things are at the worst, they generally mend; but rarely without violent convulsions and dangerous struggles.

There was nothing of more importance to be done than restraining the soldiery, who ruined the people by their pillages. Charles lessened their number, regulated their pay, and

and established military discipline. The same reformation was necessary to restrain the rapacity of the officers, as there was to set bounds to the licentiousness of the soldiers.* Several nobles formed a party: the duke of Alençon breathed into the dauphin (afterwards Lewis XI.) sentiments of rebellion, to which he seemed by nature too prone. That young prince appeared at the head of the factious. The count of Dunois, jealous of the constable, forgot his duty, but very soon repented it, and returned to his master, who shewed, by his conduct, that a great man should forgive faults which are not persisted in. The vigour with which they pursued the rebels soon stopped the course of their enterprises. Lewis sued for pardon, and obtained it; but afterwards threatened to return, if pardon was not granted to Tremoille, and some other of his partizans. 'The doors are open,' says the king to him, 'and if they are not wide enough, I 'will throw down twenty fathoms of the 'wall to make way for you: go, we shall 'find princes of our own blood who will 'serve us better than you have done.' The dauphin deserved this reprimand: he was silent, and did not attempt to depart at that time.

Among an infinity of melancholy objects, history here presents us with an instance of generosity worthy of the most refined age: the duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good, stifling the hatred which divided his house and that of Orleans, delivered the duke who bore that title, and who had been prisoner in England from the battle of Agincourt; not satisfied with paying his ransom and being his benefactor, he became likewise his friend. This opulent, magnificent, delightful prince, the institutor of the order of the golden fleece, distinguished himself among the princes, his cotemporaries, less by his power and riches than by the true merit of doing good.

Charles marched at the head of his troops, and supported his superiority over the English. He took Pantoise by assault, which Talbot in vain endeavoured to succour. An uniform detail of other expeditions would be tedious and useless. The contending parties had often entered on the negociations of a peace; but could produce only a truce, during which the king executed his project of reforming the military. He raised fifteen companies of ordnance, every one having a hundred fighting men, and each six horses. At the same time, he established a body of archers, in number four thousand (muskets not being

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then much in uſe, and bows continuing to be ſo). Theſe troops were always to be under colours. In diſbanding the remainder of the militia, there was particular care taken to make artificers or labourers of them, to prevent their turning to banditti. The principal cities and countries ſurrounding them, were at firſt charged with furniſhing a ſupport to the ſoldiers which were quartered upon them: but, if we may believe Mezerai, (who is a little ſuſpected in many affairs) the people, always affected with the preſent evil, and careleſs of what was to come, preferred a tax in money for the payment of the troops, without conſidering, that when it was once eſtabliſhed, it would no longer depend on them, either for duration or increaſe. I will not examine the juſtice of this ſentiment. It is very certain, that the perpetual tolls * were then eſtabliſhed for the maintenance of the ſoldiers. Monarchy gained nothing more by this than a regular militia ſubſiſting on its vaſſals. The people might be ſaid to gain much, being no longer expoſed to the intolerable vexations of theſe robbers; for they deſerved

* The ancient taxes were ſo called, becauſe the collectors marked on a little wooden tally whatever they received of the contributors; the art of writing not being then very common.

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no better name. However, royal authority was certainly ſtrengthened by reformation; the country was repeopled, commerce again began to flouriſh, and there was no longer any fear of being robbed or murdered by thoſe who ſhould have been the defenders of their properties. The remainder of the taxes became perpetual under this reign, which amounts to nine millions of our preſent current coin.

Beſides the companies of ordnance, every village was to furniſh a free archer exempt from tally; which, altogether, formed a body of troops ſufficiently numerous to defend the ſtate. The Engliſh, weakened by many loſſes, deprived of the duke of Bedford, one of the greateſt men of his age, divided at London by court intrigues, were, nevertheleſs, intractable. They broke the truce, by ravaging a town belonging to the duke of Britanny, who was ſincerely attached to the king. This imprudence, heightened by an air of haughtineſs, coſt them dear. All Normandy was ſoon after in the hands of the French.

James Cœur, who had enriched himſelf by commerce, perhaps contributed more than the courage of the warriors to ſo important a conqueſt. The money which he furniſhed Charles with, enabled him to undertake and to execute. A few years after,

this famous merchant becoming minister of the finances, under the title of treasurer to the king, was condemned to exile, and loss of his possessions. Such is sometimes the recompence of services.

The greatest part of the world believed that he fell a victim to jealousy. Mr. Villaret leaves some doubt of his innocence, and gives reason to think, that part of the finances of the state had swelled his treasury: but he at the same time confesses, that the commissaries employed in this process were willing to find him guilty. Indeed their conduct shewed more passion than equity; besides that, they shared among themselves the spoils of his estate. Supposing him culpable of some transgressions, (for it was plainly proved, that he was not guilty of poisoning Agnes Sorrel) we may yet reckon him amongst the illustrious victims of ingratitude and envy. A particular worth remarking is, that in his process the privileges of the clergy were restrained. 'A species of preservation,' says Mr. Villerette, 'which was always 'assumed with precaution; but which, 'in France, was never able to abridge 'the course of justice.' Guienne was retaken in less time than Normandy. The English re-entered it only to be driven out a second time. General Talbot, whom they called

called their Achilles, loſt his life in battle. Bordeaux and other places ſubmitted, and were no more under the dominion of the Engliſh. There remained now in the hands of the enemy, no other places in the kingdom than Calais and Guienne. The kings of England have, nevertheleſs, aſſumed to themſelves the title of kings of France. Might not the king of France, with the ſame right, have taken that of king of England, from the reign of Philip the Auguſt? This hopeleſs revolution, under a prince who too much neglected buſineſs for pleaſure, was not only the effect of the wiſdom of the generals, of the courage of the nobles, of the diſcipline eſtabliſhed among the troops, of the good order which they now kept in their finances, of the troubles of England, where the houſe of York diſputed the throne with that of Lancaſter; but ſtill more of the zeal of the French nation, taught by its miſtakes and its misfortunes; impatient of ſubmitting to a fatal yoke which it had given itſelf, and more faithful in ſupporting the cauſe of the ſtate, than it had been careleſs in ſuffering it to be betrayed. Nothing more diſturbed the happineſs of Charles VII. than the conduct of the dauphin. This young prince, full of wit and valour, already celebrated for

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his exploits, tarnished all his good qualities by the fierceness and turbulence of his character. In the year 1446, he had retired from the court discontented with the king and his ministers, and enraged against Agnes Sorrel, who indeed enjoyed the greatest favour, but who, it must be confessed, had made use of it for the good of the state. No consideration could induce him to return. He had married, without the consent of his father, a daughter of the duke of Savoy. He governed Dauphiny as a sovereign. Knowing that the king would be desirous of securing his person, he asked an asylum of Philip the Good, and retired into Brabant, where he lived in moderate tranquillity. The duke of Alençon, a prince of the blood, guilty of the same revolt with the dauphin, still held a treaty with the English. Charles resolved to extinguish, by a just severity, these first glimmerings of faction: he proceeded against the duke as a traitor, and changed the condemnation of death to perpetual imprisonment. He proposed this question to parliament, If the king could assist at the judgment of a law-suit entered against a peer of France? They replied, That he not only could, but that his presence was absolutely necessary. The decision was carried according to ancient custom:

cuſtom: 'A cuſtom,' ſays Mr. de Voltaire, 'which has appeared ſince unworthy of 'royal majeſty, ſince the preſence of the 'ſovereign ſeemed to conſtrain ſuffrages; 'and, in a criminal affair, the ſame pre-'ſence which ought to announce nothing 'but mercy, commanded rigour.' Mean-while the duke of Britanny languiſhed in a diſorder which defied the force of medi-cine. Their ignorance made them believe that he was bewitched, and ſome adviſed ſending for magicians to diſſolve the charm. He himſelf oppoſed it, ſaying, 'That he 'choſe rather to die by the hands of God, 'than thoſe of the devil.' By his death the inheritance of Britanny paſſed to a brother of the conſtable of Richmont. This great captain preſerved the dignity of conſtable; 'becauſe that he was willing,' he ſaid, 'to honour, in his old age, a 'place, which had honoured him in his 'youth.' He did homage to the king, ſuch as he had done to his predeceſſors, declaring, that it was not a Lege-homage. Charles VII. full of acknowledgment, be-lieved that he ought to recal him to it. France and Britanny very ſoon afterwards loſt Richmont. Though the duke of Burgundy, in receiving his eſtates through the generoſity of the dauphin, had wiſely obſerved the regards due to a ſovereign;

yet reciprocal complaints announced an approaching rupture, which would, perhaps, have broken out, if the king had lived much longer. Fear and chagrin caused his death. He had been persuaded, that the dauphin had a design of poisoning him. This idea troubled him to such a degree, that he obstinately, for several days, refused all nourishment. He died at the age of sixty. Father Daniel insists upon it, that it is doing an injury to Charles VII. not to look on him as one of our greatest kings.' Mr. Hainault, nevertheless, assures us, that he was only a witness to the wonders of his reign. 'They 'say,' added he, 'that fortune, in despite of the monarch's indifference, and 'for the sake of doing something singular, 'chose rather to give him, at that time, 'powerful enemies and valiant defenders. 'It was not that he had a vast deal of 'courage, but if he did appear at the 'head of his armies, it was as a warrior and 'not as a chief. The greatest part of his 'life was employed in gallantry and feasts.' Are not these reproaches exaggerated? He certainly became, in a manner, another man when he began to enjoy his power; few kings have governed with more wisdom, and laboured with more success for the happiness of the nation: he was then adored;

adored; a circumſtance which has not happened to many good princes. A contemporary author bears teſtimony of his aſſiduity in council, and his application to buſineſs. Suppoſing him of a middling capacity, we ought at leaſt to acknowledge his merit in the judgment he ſhewed, by beſtowing his confidence on great men, who ſeconded his views. He knew how to recompence ſervices by the infallible means of exciting emulation. But if Agnes Sorrel had not loved the ſtate as well as ſhe loved the monarch, Richmont and Dunois would, perhaps, have miſcarried in their enterpriſes. A miſtreſs of Charles's ſhared the glory of his reign, while Mary of Anjou, his wife, was reduced to the obſcure merit of patiently ſuffering the infidelity of her huſband. Printing was invented in Germany towards the middle of this century. Thoſe who brought to Paris the firſt printed books, paſſed for magicians; for they aſcribed every thing to the power of magic.

It is unneceſſary to make reflections on the ignorance of theſe times; for it is leſs aſtoniſhing than the prodigies of the virgin, and the abſurd proceſs which condemned her to the flames. Some perſons of the higheſt rank knew ſomething of the value of letters, and eſteemed thoſe who underſtood,

ſtood them. Margaret of Scotland, firſt wife of Lewis XI. having one day found the learned Allen Chartier aſleep, gave him a kiſs. The extreme uglineſs of Chartier increaſed the ſurpiſe of the ſpectators: ſhe perceived it—'I do not,' ſays ſhe, 'kiſs 'the perſon but the mouth, from whence 'has proceeded ſuch fine things.' Theſe fine diſcourſes, then ſo much admired, are written in an uncouth ſtile, and with an ill-taſte. The univerſity at this time reckoned twenty-five thouſand ſtudents, the greateſt part of whom learned nothing more than bad Latin and vain ſubtilties. Charles VII. reformed a part of the abuſe, which once rendered this body as dangerous as we now ſee it uſeful. In reſtraining its privileges, he ſubmitted it to the laws. They abrogated a ridiculous ſtatute which excluded married men from the practice of phyſic; as if the clerks could alone teach an art, which it was not lawful to make uſe of. In ſpite of the luxury and extravagance of the modes of this time, they were ſo ignorant of the conveniencies of life, that during the hard winter in 1457, the lords and ladies of quality, who did not dare to mount a horſe, were drawn along in a tub.

LEWIS XI.

THE character of Lewis XI. was sufficiently known for them to expect a governor cruel, absolute, and whimsical. He began by effecting a conduct entirely opposite to that of Charles VII. The court-rolls were almost entirely renewed; the duke of Alençon and the count of Armagnac, justly condemned under the late reign for unpardonable crimes, again appeared. The ministry and the people very soon found out, that the system of the new king was to govern with an absolute empire; and that he would not be scrupulous of the means of increasing his authority. Pius V. Eneas Silvius, who being secretary of the council of Bael, had shewn the most ardent zeal in defending the liberties of the church; but who, afterwards becoming cardinal and pope, had publickly changed his opinion, as his interest directed; a man formed with finesse sufficient to deceive Lewis XI. offered, at a certain price, to abolish the pragmatic sanction. It was the king's interest to support this work of his predecessor; but in the hope of replacing the house of Anjou on the throne of Naples, now usurped

by Ferdinand of Arragon, he ſacrificed to the pope one of the moſt precious laws of France, though odious to the court of Rome. He afterwards inſiſted on the rights of the houſe of Anjou. Pius V. ſupported Ferdinand, and having obtained that which he wiſhed, made no other acknowledgment than eulogiums. The parliament had courageouſly oppoſed the aboliſhment of the pragmatic ſanction, which they looked on as the rampart of the Gallic church. Lewis XI. permitted the execution of it ſtill to them, excepting ſome points: he could not better revenge himſelf on the artifices of the pope. The parliament, excommunicated on this account, deſpiſed his cenſures, and, by that means, rendered them uſeleſs. This event was one of the pretences which the principal lords ſeized on to league themſelves againſt the king. The more he endeavoured to diſgrace the great men, whoſe power gave him umbrage, the more he drew on himſelf their hatred. The duke of Burgundy ſent to him Chimai to complain of the ſeveral infringements of the treaty of Arras. Lewis, in a fit of humour, demanded of Chimai, If the duke was made of any other metal than other princes? 'He muſt be made of good 'metal,' replied the ambaſſador, 'ſince 'he

'he received and protected you when no 'other person dared do it.' Philip the Good was too pacific to disturb the repose of the state; but Charles, the count of Charalois, impetuous and violent, and bearing a mortal hatred to the king, sought occasion to break out. The duke of Britanny likewise discontented, because his unjust pretensions had been opposed, excited this young prince to rebellion. They drew into their party the duke of Bourbon, and afterwards the duke of Berri, the king's brother, dangerous through the weakness of his mind, which rendered him supple to the impressions of the cabal all at once. These rebels openly declared themselves, under the common pretext of reforming the state, and supporting the rights of the people, covering their ambitious designs under the specious name of a league for the public good. The famous Dunois entered into this league. How little would it have been capable of doing, under an equitable government, and how unhappy are bad princes in furnishing pretences of rebellion to those who are the chief supports of their throne! They armed on all sides. The king took such good measures, that the count of Charalois in vain attempted to surprise the capital: the army of France and that of the Burgundians met near

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Montlheri, where they fought a bloody battle. Lewis and the count equally ſignalized their bravery, without being able to decide the victory. The rebels beſieged Paris, but very ſoon deſpaired of entering: nevertheleſs, the king followed the counſel of Francis S'force, duke of Milan, who adviſed him that, in order to diſſipate the league, he ought to promiſe every thing, and afterwards judge whether his circumſtances would oblige him to keep his promiſes; a maxim too conformable to his political artifice. He then ſigned a deceitful treaty, by which he yielded the ſovereignty of Normandy to his brother, and the dominion of ſeveral other places to the principal chiefs. They afterwards talked of the public good, without any other effect, than that of gaining leſs to the people. The event of this league made it be afterwards juſtly ſtiled the league of public evil.

The following quarrels between the dukes of Berri and Britanny, furniſhed to the king an occaſion of breaking the treaty; at the ſame time that he negociated with the Britons, he raiſed Normandy againſt his brother. Always embroiled in troubles and diſputes, deſpoiling ſome of their fortunes, making informations againſt others; he every day increaſed the diſcontent of the nobles;

nobles; but he knew how to prevent their enterpriſes, by dividing them. To juſtify his conduct with regard to the duke of Berri, he reſolved to convoke the ſtates, and to refer to their deciſion ſo important an affair; perſuaded that they would maintain the rights of the crown. He was not miſtaken in his confidence; the ſtates declared, that Normandy was inſeparably united to the crown; and that the king had a right of holding it to himſelf from the declaration of Charles V. which fixed the apenage of the children of France to twelve thouſand livres a year, to be raiſed on lands which were erected into a dutchy or county; but that having given the king's brother, Charles duke of Berri, no leſs than ſixty thouſand livres, agreed he ſhould be requeſted to inſert a clauſe in the grant, to prevent its being made a precedent. They promiſed him all kind of ſuccour in caſe of war: and this aſſembly was a proof of the great zeal they had for their ſovereign. Philip the Good having died the preceding year, the count of Charalois, Charles the Raſh, his ſon and ſucceſſor, an irreconcilable enemy to Lewis, prepared himſelf for new hoſtilities. The king reckoning more on his policy than his arms, always preferred negociations to battles. His confidence in the cardinal

of Balue bishop of Evreux, whose perfidy he very soon experienced, made him take an imprudent step, which had like to have lost him; while his ambassadors were endeavouring to support the people of Liege against the new duke of Burgundy. Balue persuaded him to have a meeting with that prince in the valley of Peronne, accompanied only by some noblemen: as soon as he had arrived there, they learned the revolt of the people of Liege; Lewis did not imagine it was so near, but his agents were but too well assured of it, before they were apprised of the interview. At this news the duke, transported with fury, and master of the person of the king, all at once took the most violent resolution. At length, from the safe counsels of Calmont, he exacted of Lewis, that he should assist him against the people of Leige. Lewis had every thing to fear and nothing to refuse. He accompanied his vassal; he became the minister of his vengeance. Liege was overcome; the duke set it on fire, and justified the rebels, in some degree, by his barbarous cruelty. The king was desirous of making terms with his brother, as he had with the Burgundian: he offered him Guienne for an apenage, and persuaded him to marry Isabella the sister and heiress of the king of Castile. Mean-

while, the man whom he placed moſt confidence in, took every meaſure to break his ſchemes. It was the cardinal Balue, a perſon born in the loweſt ſtation, raiſed through his ſuppleneſs, without virtue, without breeding, and to whom, according to the obſervation of the ingenious Mr. Duclos, there was only hypocriſy wanting to make up every vice. He had purchaſed the purple robe, by obtaining letters patent to aboliſh entirely the pragmatic ſanction; letters which the parliament refuſed to inroll. He forgot the duties of his own function, to review the troops in the habit of a biſhop, which gave occaſion for a nobleman to ſay to the king: ‘ Sir, I beg ‘ that you would ſend me to Evreux to ‘ ordain prieſts, ſince the biſhop is come ‘ here to review ſoldiers.’ United to the biſhop of Verdun by a conformity of character and intereſt, Balue deceived the maſter whoſe ſole favour he poſſeſſed. One of their letters diſcovered their perfidy. Lewis had them arreſted, and incloſed in iron cages invented by the biſhop of Verdun. They ought to have been proſecuted according to the laws of France; but the oppoſition of the pope, though ſtrongly oppoſed by the king's ambaſſadors, ſtopped the courſe of this affair, and the guilty were releaſed from priſon.

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The duke of Berri accepted of the apenage, which was offered him; but Isabella of Castile married Ferdinand of Arragon, who became master of Spain by this marriage. The two brothers still disputed on several articles: the death of the new duke of Guienne terminated the difference. He was, it was said, poisoned by a monk, his confessor. It was but little doubted in Europe that Lewis had been the instigator of this crime, who, when he was dauphin, had been feared as a parricide by his father. History ought not to accuse him without proofs; but it must be allowed to complain of his having deserved such a suspicion. Give me leave also to observe, that a prince, culpable of avowed guilt, is himself blameable for the rash judgments which people will naturally form on all his actions. Mr. de Voltaire, from whom I print this remark, makes it a truly useful lesson, both to rash accusers of the great, and to the great themselves, that they may not, by their conduct, provoke such censure. Nobody contributed more than the duke of Burgundy to spread these suspicions, through his own fiery disposition, his hatred for the king, and their mutual vengeance against each other. Having very soon broken the peace of Peronne, he published in a manifesto, that Lewis de-

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ſigned to murder his brother by evil practices, poiſon, and witchcraft; that he was a parricide, a heretic, and an idolater; and that all the princes of Europe ought to unite againſt him. This king, whom they proclaimed as an idolater and heretic, (accuſations contradictory to each other) was, in fact, a devout zealot for religion; and ſuch abſurdity equally proves the injuſtice, the hatred, and the ignorance which then reigned.

Charles the Raſh again took to arms, and made war in a furious manner. He beſieged Beauvais. The troubles of England had, for a long while, freed France from the invaſions of its moſt powerful enemies. Henry VI. was dethroned, re-eſtabliſhed after a long impriſonment, vanquiſhed anew, and maſſacred with his ſon, by the orders of Edward IV. chief of the houſe of York: which prince was no ſooner poſſeſſed of a crown ſoiled with blood, than he renewed his ancient pretenſions. Edward threatened Lewis to invade France, if he did not reſtore Normandy and Guienne. 'Tell your maſter 'I will not be counſelled by him,' ſaid the king to his herald. This anſwer ſeemed to imply a kind of reſolution for fighting; but Lewis, according to his old maxims, embarraſſed the enemy without

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hazarding any thing himſelf. Seeing the Engliſh in the kingdom, he negociated with Edward: he promiſed to pay him fifty thouſand crowns a year, and influenced his principal officers to force on him preſents and careſſes. Happily the duke of Burgundy, being at war with the duke of Lorraine, had not ſeconded the enemies, though he had ſolicited them to this undertaking in a very lively manner. With a formidable army, they might have over-run France; but intrigue and money preſerved the king at the expence of his glory. The Burgundian now deprived of his alliance with the Engliſh, made a new treaty with his ſovereign. Never were conventions and oaths made with ſo little truth. An illuſtrious victim was now ſacrificed to the ſevere juſtice of the monarch. It was the conſtable, St. Paul, his brother-in-law, who had been betrayed, outraged, and thrown on the ſide of the duke of Burgundy, who then abandoned him. His proſecution was carried on with rigour, and he died on a ſcaffold. Lewis XI. in order to reſtrain the great, was determined to ſacrifice the heads of the ſtate. The count of Armagnac and the duke of Alençon, condemned under Charles VII. and re-eſtabliſhed in the beginning of this reign, had already ſubmitted to puniſh-

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ment for their new rebellion. We afterwards ſee, in 1477, the duke of Namur, of the houſe of Armagnac, die at the place of execution at Paris, after having been put to torture, and his children drawn under the ſcaffold, by order of the king, to be bathed in the blood of their father. Horrible cruelty! more likely to make him hated as a tyrant than reſpected as a monarch.

Charles the Raſh could not live in repoſe, nor ſet any bounds to his ambition: imprudence and fury precipitated him to extremes. For a long time he had been animated againſt the Swiſs; whether it was becauſe they were allied to Lewis, or whether it was to ſubject them to himſelf, he made a moſt frivolous pretence for attacking them. This warlike nation having ſhook off the yoke of the houſe of Auſtria in 1037, and preſerved its liberty by prodigies of conſtancy and valour, always ready to defend itſelf; but deſirous of being at peace with its neighbours, was forced to arm againſt the duke. It was repreſented to him, that the bridles of his horſes were of more value than all Switzerland. Deaf to all prayers and reaſons, he made a campaign againſt them: the Swiſs beat him in a defile; all his baggage fell into their hands. Such was the ſimplicity of

of this people, that the silver vessel which the duke used to drink out of, was sold as a vessel of pewter; and his richest diamond, which would now be esteemed at eighteen hundred thousand livres, was sold for a florin, and went through many hands at the same price. This battle of Granson irritated the fury of Charles, without curing him of his imprudence. He very soon lost a second at Morat, where the duke of Lorraine fought with the Swiss the following year. He was again defeated under the walls of Nancy. It was there that this wretched prince perished. There were few who equalled him in riches and power; but those things which would have made him happy were ever wanting, moderation and wisdom. He was always a torment to himself, by being the scourge of the world. The king did not dissemble the joy which these events caused him. His last treaty with the duke had not hindered him from proposing a case of conscience, which displayed his little integrity; it was to know if he could, according to the laws of God and his conscience, permit, suffer, or tolerate, any princes, lords, or communities, who had or should have a quarrel with the duke of Burgundy, and whether, if they made war on him, he should indemnify them. Two princes,

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who engaged by oath to ſerve for each other againſt all adverſaries, at the ſame time mutually practiſed the contrary; it was nevertheleſs decided, that the duke having always ſhewn a reſpect for the king and kingdom, the king ſhould leave other princes to act, and at the ſame time give them to underſtand, that if they would make war on the duke of Burgundy, he ſhould be ſatisfied, and would never oppoſe them; but that he would neither ſolicit or give them any ſuccours. It is a doubt which is moſt to be wondered at, the ſcruples which the king ſought in order to violate his promiſe, and at the ſame time to quiet his conſcience, or the iniquity of the caſuiſts, who ſubtilly managed the means. To aſk advice in a matter of this kind, is to be before-hand a prevaricator: but there never was a time, in which the ſecret of accommodating morals to the paſſions of the great was not known.

Maria of Burgundy being the only heir to Charles, a part of his eſtates were of right to return to the crown. The king loſt not an inſtant; he ſent troops and ambaſſadors to all parts. Burgundy ſubmitted without reſiſtance; but Flanders and Artois declared for the princeſs. The world in general reproach Lewis with not

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having married her to the dauphin. Nothing could have been more advantageous: he wiſhed this marriage to take place. Maria was not at firſt averſe to it, though the dauphin was but ſeven years old, and ſhe near twenty; but a falſe ſtep of the king made her reject him, and redoubled the averſion of the Flemings; ſo true it is, that fineſſe is often oppoſite to good policy. Maximilian of Auſtria, ſon of the emperor Frederick III. was preferred; a fatal event, which produced above two ages of war and deſtruction. The huſband of the heireſs of Burgundy of neceſſity became the enemy of France; as ſoon as he was married he took to arms. He was as yet but weak, and Lewis not loving war, a truce ſuſpended hoſtilities. This cunning monarch, who appeared to be carried away entirely by his intereſt, ſhewed himſelf truly generous in ſupporting the oppreſſed againſt a violent and vindictive pope. The Medicis governed Florence: enriched by their commerce, happy through the courteſy of their manners, jealouſy formed againſt them a horrible conſpiracy, in which Sextus IV. had but too much part, and of which the chief was Salviati archbiſhop of Piſa. Laurence and Julian, grandſons of the great Come of Medicis, were attacked in the church during maſs;

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the youngeſt died on the ſpot, the other eſcaped from theſe murders. The people very ſoon revenged him and became his benefactors. The archbiſhop of Piſa was hanged on a window. This was, for the pope, a moſt ſpecious pretext to give himſelf up to the moſt cruel reſentment; he carried it to the utmoſt exceſs. The Florentines implored the ſuccours of Lewis: his ambaſſadors ſpoke ſtrongly to Sextus, who affected to treat the family of the Medicis as merchants. 'They 'were,' he ſaid, 'of the loweſt extraction.' In ſpite of all the turns of the policy of Rome, the king forbid all commerce with that court; and called together a national council to renew the pragmatic ſanction. The pope, not being very ſtrong, made peace with the republic of Florence, withdrawing excommunications, and foreſeeing all the conſequences of this affair. Lewis, on his ſide, was going to ſign, with the king of England, a truce, which was to laſt a hundred years after their death, when Maximilian of Auſtria, though diſappointed of the aid which he had expected from the Engliſh, broke the truce which had been concluded the preceding year. They took the French county in one campaign; they fought in Artois with a loſs pretty equal on both ſides. Truces and hoſtilities

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ſucceeded each other in an infinite number, till the death of Maria of Burgundy in 1482. This unforeſeen event changed the face of affairs. The indocile Artois, leſs ſubmiſſive ſtill to a ſtranger than to their natural princeſs, ſeized on two children which ſhe had had by Maximilian, forcing them to conclude the treaty of Arras with Lewis, by which they gave in marriage to the dauphin Margaret, daughter to the late princeſs, who was to have Artois and the French county for her dowry. This princeſs was carried into the kingdom, but the marriage never was concluded; in like manner as we ſee under the reign of Charles VIII. that the daughter of Edward IV. was promiſed to the dauphin. The chagrin of ſeeing herſelf deceived, cut ſhort her days.

The laſt years of the king were employed in the ſame turbulence and intrigues which had filled his whole reign: worn out by ſickneſs, he was not leſs jealous of his authority, and more attentive to buſineſs: the fear of death, nevertheleſs, terrified his ſoul. A legate had addreſs ſufficient to give him ſcruples on the detaining of the cardinal Balue and the biſhop of Verdun. The biſhop obtained his liberty, the cardinal was put into the hands of the legate, under promiſe that he ſhould be puniſhed

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at Rome, where he received nothing but honour: how ſtrange, when biſhops leſs culpable than he, had periſhed on the ſcaffold! While the king loſt ſtrength from day to day, fortune increaſed his dominions. The laſt prince of the houſe of Anjou left him Provence by will, with his claim on the kingdom of Naples and Sicily. Provence was very ſoon reunited to the crown; and Lewis was too circumſpect to ſpread his ambition further: the conqueſt of a foreign kingdom appeared to him as vain as dangerous. His ſucceſſor thought otherwiſe, and had reaſon to repent of it. This prince, ſo powerful, became a prey to ſuſpicion, at the approach of death, fearing his own ſon, changing his domeſtics daily, giving continual orders for freſh executions, and was at the ſame time a ſlave to a phyſician both rapacious and inſolent, who threatened to abandon him, and who dared to ſay to him, 'I know, that ſome morning 'you will ſend me away as you have done 'others; but I ſwear by God, that you 'will not live eight days afterwards.' The king, on this, redoubled his devotions: he loaded his pockets with relics; he bought a little image, which coſt one hundred and ſixty livres, was profuſe in his preſents to churches and monks, in the hopes of preſerving himſelf. St. Francis, of Paul, a hermit

hermit of Calabre, was sent for from the midst of Italy to his assistance: he came, the king threw himself at his feet, humbly conjuring him to cure him. Francis endeavoured to dispose him for death, and to change his superstition into virtue; but Lewis's fear of the loss of life was stronger than his desire to die like a Christian. Always usurping arbitrary power, always inspiring terror by his cruelties, he at length died at the age of sixty.

We shall relate some particulars of him equally useful and curious. Lewis XI. affected in his dress a sordid and indecent simplicity. In an interview between him and the king of Castile in 1463, he appeared in a habit of coarse cloth, his head covered with an old hat ornamented with a leaden figure of our lady; while the Castilian sparkled with the greatest magnificence. This contrast made him despicable in the eyes of the Spaniards; but he had gained their ministers by bribery, and assured himself of success in his designs. The chief expence of his household was for his table; from twelve thousand livres he carried it to thirty-seven: he not only invited the lords of his court to eat with him, in order to attach them the more strongly to him, but even strangers from whom he could gather any thing: sometimes merchants; for he gave a parti-

cular attention to commerce. A merchant named Maſter John, flattered by this diſtinction, determined to aſk of him letters of nobility: the king granted them; but, from that time took no further notice of him. Maſter John teſtified his ſurpriſe: 'Go, Mr. Gentleman,' ſaid Lewis to him, 'when I made you ſit down at my table, 'I looked on you as the firſt of your claſs; 'you are now the laſt, and it would be an 'injury to others if I ſtill did you the 'ſame favour.' An excellent leſſon this for thoſe who prefer vain titles to perſonal merit. He was often ſeen to mix with the citizens, and, to inform himſelf of their affairs, had his name inſcribed in the companies of the artizans. His anſwer which he made when he was reproached with not ſupporting his dignity, was this, 'When 'pride goes before, ſhame and misfortune follow very near.' A deſire of keeping people of high birth under ſubjection, (which was a principal object of his policy) was, without doubt, a reaſon why he preferred thoſe who were low born to offices, that he might deſtroy them by a word. He had the addreſs, according to the expreſſion of Francis I. of raiſing pages above kings: but this was more owing to his cruelty than any other method; and he ſometimes ſeverely proved how danger-

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thus it was to give his confidence to mean and base souls, who were capable of intrigue and destitute of honour, and who flattered him only to deceive him. He was often mistaken in his finesse. It was a frequent expression with him, that he who knew not how to dissemble, knew not how to reign. ‘If,’ says he, ‘my hat was conscious of my secret, I would burn it.’ By repeating too often this maxim, he, according to the remark of Mr. Duclos, lost the fruit of it. We cannot think without horror of the cruel executions which provost Tristan the hermit (who was honoured with his friendship) performed by his orders; of the iron cages, enormous chains, and the most cruel tortures, which became so common in the last years of his reign. Tyranny can never be allied with true grandeur; however, this piece of justice must be rendered him, that he made every one fulfil the duties of his office. Having one day taken a review of the officers of his household, and finding the equipages not in good order, he distributed to each of them escrutores, saying, ‘since they would not ‘serve him with their arms, they should ‘with their pens.’ This kind of correction had more effect on them than the odious cruelties which he sometimes used.

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He would have deſerved commendation for preferring treaties to war, if it had not been his conſtant ſyſtem to deceiv[illegible] in negociations. It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that he ſhewed real prudence in always carefully avoiding quarrels at a diſtance. Genoa having ſubmitted itſelf to France under Charles VI. this unſteady people, after frequent rebellions, again offered to acknowledge Lewis XI. for their ſovereign. He replied, 'You 'give yourſelves to me, and I give you 'to the devil.' The continual infidelity of the Genoeſe juſtifies this anſwer. When we conſider, that this perjured and wicked prince was the firſt of our kings who always bore the title of Moſt Chriſtian; when we ſee him delivering himſelf to all the practices of a popular devotion, making pilgrimages, wearing in his cap images of pewter and lead, giving the county of Boulogne to the Holy Virgin, demanding of the pope the right of aſſiſting at the holy office with ſurplice and ameſs, eſtabliſhing the cuſtom of reciting the angelus at mid-day, &c. we know not how to reconcile ſo many marks of religion with ſo many vices, which humanity ſhrinks from; but we often ſee in nature ſtrange contraſts. He had an oddturned mind, and a bad heart. 'This 'oddity,' ſays Father Daniel, 'made him

'neglect

'neglect the essential part of devotion, and 'content himself with exterior practices. 'It rendered him scrupulous in trifles, when 'he hesitated not in things of the greatest 'importance.' One of his superstitions was, that he would never swear by a certain cross of St. Leo, which, it was said, had the faculty of striking those with death within a year who perjured themselves on it; but it was his constant practice to oblige others to swear by this very cross. Superstition and credulity always go together. He entertained astrologers at his court; but irritated against one of these impostors who had foretold the death of his mistress, he sent for him, resolved without doubt not to spare him: 'Thou who seest into futurity,' says he, 'tell me when thou shalt die.' The cunning astrologer saved himself by this reply, 'I shall die three days before 'your Majesty.' They from that time took care of his person. Knowledge was then so far from wise philosophy, that the extravagant dispute between the realists and the nominals became at once a religious and a state affair. He interested himself in it, to know if things or words were the objects of logic. This grand question divided all the schools, and extended itself to the mystery of the faith. The opponents on both sides mutually treated

treated each other as heretics: they solicited government to interfere: the king declared for the realists, and called in all the books of the nominals. He at length restored these rhapsodies to their liberty, which no person has been able to read for a long time since, while the memoirs of Philip of Comines are in the hands of the whole world. This state historian would be still more estimable, if he had not abandoned the duke of Burgundy his master, to attach himself to Lewis XI. Several in giving his learning the deserved applause, reproach him with his false heart. Lewis XI. established the post-office, and, to give the finishing stroke to this useful institution, ordered that the places should not be vacated but by death, resignation, or forfeiture. Seeming to keep up to the strict rules of justice, he examined all the laws and customs. In fine, he made a fixed code, and abridged the tediousness of law-suits. He ordered that weights and measures should be uniform in his kingdom; a useful project, the execution of which would be always desirable. He instituted the order of knighthood of St. Michael, making it at once as brilliant as that of the golden fleece instituted by Philip the Good duke of Burgundy. These orders contributed very much to make the

ancient

ancient chivalry fall to the ground, already much decayed ſince the eſtabliſhment of the company of ordnance. It was a wiſe policy to make thoſe titles of honour valuable, which attached the ſubject to the ſovereign. He had increaſed the tax to three millions, and raiſed, during twenty years, four millions and ſeven hundred thouſand livres per annum, which would amount to twenty-three millions at this time. Charles VII. had never raiſed more than eighteen hundred thouſand livres, though it may be ſaid this prince did not draw money from his ſubjects to ſpare their blood. He exhorted his ſon to diminiſh theſe taxes; a counſel often given by dying monarchs, but rarely executed by their ſucceſſors.

CHARLES VIII.

THE laſt king had reſtrained his nobles and his people by policy and rigour. This ſubmiſſion could ſcarcely be ſupported under a king of thirteen years old, weak of body, and of an underſtanding too badly cultivated to ſuſtain the weight of

of businefs. The beginning of Charles VIII.'s reign was troubled by a civil war. Ann of France, his elder sister, wife of Peter of Bourbon, lord of Beaujeu, a princefs of uncommon merit, governed the kingdom during the minority of her brother, according to the last will of Lewis XI.; she found a competition in the duke of Orleans, since Lewis XII. the presumptive heir to the crown, who, through his ambition, was the disturber of the kingdom, before he was the father of it through his goodnefs. His intrigues against Madam Beaujeu were unsuccefsful. The states-general confirmed the orders of the late king: the parliament, to whom it was afterwards addreffed, difapproved of his pretenfions, and the first prefident, James of Vaugerie, told him, that the government, the war, and the finances, were not the businefs of that tribunal. The difinherited duke revolted with a confiderable party, and retired into Britanny. The first year of this war turned to the advantage of the king; and at length the battle of St. Aubyn finished the conquest of the rebels. The duke of Orleans was made prisoner.

England then was the theatre of a new revolution, Henry VII. of the houfe of

of Lancaster, by the mother's side, having gained the crown from that of York. Notwithstanding which, there were English engaged in the army of Britanny. These implacable enemies of France, ardently seized the occasion of tearing it to pieces. Mezerai remarks, that a combat of Jays and Pyes seems to have presaged the battle of St. Aubyn. How could an estimable historian, of a liberal mind, be so superstitious in these later ages, and so fond of the marvellous, contrary to true history? The duke of Britanny dying without male-heirs, the government immediately thought of the king's pretensions to this dutchy, which it was essential should be reunited to the crown. Maximilian of Austria flattered himself with the acquisition of it, by espousing Ann of Britanny. The marriage was already made by proxy. It was afterwards broken, and they resolved to marry this princess to Charles VIII. She had as much aversion for him as she had liking for Maximilian; her conscience likewise recoiled at the idea of an engagement incompatible with the first which she had made; but Britanny being exposed to French arms, the council of Ann entered into the views of the court. The advantages of peace, the superior reasons of state with regard to particular interests, the ne-

cessity

cessity of yielding to circumstances, were all so well represented, that she at length sacrificed her repugnance to them. By the treaty of peace and of marriage, Charles and Ann mutually yielded their rights over Britanny. The duke of Orleans, whom the king had generously released from prison, zealously served in this affair, though he was enamoured with the same princess. He became from that time as good a subject as he had been an ambitious head of party. Generous souls may sometimes be led into error, but they can never be ungrateful, and gratitude carries them very soon back to their duty. This marriage was a double affront to Maximilian. He saw himself deprived of his wife; and his daughter Margaret, who was contracted to the king by the treaty of Arras, had been sent back from France. He breathed out nothing but invectives: he had recourse to arms, to negociations; and, while his ambassadors were employed in England and Spain, he rendered himself master of Arras. Charles having purchased peace with England, found it no difficult matter to crush a feeble enemy, to whom the emperor his father would give no assistance. Never was occasion more favourable to seize the spoils of the house of Burgundy. The rage for foreign con-

quests

quests blinded the eyes of the young king. Heir by right of the house of Anjou to the kingdom of Naples, which had been lost for a long time, he thought of nothing but regaining it. He sacrificed a certain advantage to a deceitful hope. On one side, he rendered to Ferdinand, the Catholic king of Spain, Rousillon and Cerdagne, which had been engaged to the Lewis XI. without exacting any other thing than neutrality in the war with Italy. It is pretended, that two cordeliers, bribed by the artful Ferdinand, contributed much to this treaty, and that they made it an obligation of conscience to the king and Madam de Beaujeu. On the other side, he restored the French county and Artois to Maximilian, sending him back his daughter. All his wishes bent towards Naples; young flatterers excited his impetuosity. That which he was willing to lose in France, he reckoned he should regain with an overplus in Italy. In spite of the representations of his sister, then dutchess of Bourbon, and the chief heads of his council, he set out with but few troops, and hardly any money, upon this dangerous expedition. Pope Alexander VI. who at first exhorted him to it, afterwards engaged in a league, as well as Peter of Medicis, with Alphonso of Arragon, king of

Naples: but intrigue was better underſtood in Italy than the art of war; the French had only to ſhew themſelves to ſpread terror. Florence opened its gates; Rome could not defend itſelf; the pope, incloſed within the caſtle of St. Angelo, haſted to capitulate, and put into the hands of the king, Zezim, ſon of the famous Mahomet II. who had conquered Conſtantinople in 1453. Zezim having diſputed the empire with his brother Bajazet, was defeated, and ſought an aſylum at Rhodes; the knights delivered him up to the king, and the king to the pope. Alexander VI. the moſt unworthy man in the world to wear the tiara, applied to Bajazet the ſultan of the Turks, to aſſiſt him with ſuccours againſt the French; in return for which, he certainly intended to have put Zezim into his hands. But having inſiſted that the pope ſhould put him again in poſſeſſion of this young prince, flattering himſelf that he ſhould, by this means, become formidable to Bajazet, whom he propoſed to attack, the pope was obliged to comply. Zezim was ſent to Charles; but if ſome authors are to be credited, he was poiſoned before his diſmiſſion, and the poiſon was adminiſtered by the pope. When we ſee the king of France, the maſter of Rome, kiſſing the feet of Alexander VI. a monſter ſtained

ſtained with all the crimes of a Tiberius, preſenting him the water to waſh after maſs, and placing himſelf below the cardinals, we have, perhaps, the ſtrongeſt inſtance that can be produced, of the force of cuſtom, or the reverence with which religion inſpires us for its miniſters.

Meanwhile, the king of Naples ſaw the ſtorm riſe for his deſtruction; his cruelty had rendered him odious, and he feared his own ſubjects no leſs than his enemies. Tyrants are generally cowards; he gave up the kingdom to Ferdinand his ſon, and inſtantly diſappeared. Charles advanced towards Naples as if he had been only a traveller; nothing ſtopped him. He entered into this capital five months after his departure from France. The rapidity of his progreſs only increaſed his imprudence; and while he was giving a looſe to pleaſures, and making feaſts and tournaments, the pope, the emperor, the king of Spain, the Venetians, and the duke of Milan, entered into an alliance to wreſt from him a conqueſt which he had taken no care to ſecure. Inſtead of taking meaſures againſt their deſigns, he ſuddenly quitted Naples, leaving only three or four thouſand men under the command of the count de Montpenſier, a courageous prince, but whoſe talents were not equal to the importance of his

commiſſion. The return of the king was not eaſy: he was to croſs the Apenine, and tranſport the artillery through places where no carriage had ever paſſed. The Swiſs drew them themſelves, endeavouring to repair by this means a fault which they had been guilty of, and which had irritated the king againſt them. The confederacy waited for him at Tornoue near Placentia, and his deſtruction ſeemed to be inevitable; yet, with only ſeven or eight thouſand men, he defeated the Italian army in leſs than an hour, which conſiſted of thirty thouſand combatants. Commines aſſures us, that this aſtoniſhing victory had been predicted by Jerome Savonarola, a Dominican enthuſiaſt, who pretended to inſpiration at Florence, declaimed againſt Alexander VI. and was condemned to the fire as a cheat and ſeducer. His predictions reſembled many others hazarded with confidence by impoſtors or fanatics, and ſometimes verified by the event; becauſe it is impoſſible but that ſometimes they ſhould be ſo.

Alexander VI. ſeeing the king diſtant from Rome, dared to ſend to him to Turin, an order to go directly from Italy, and withdraw his troops from the kingdom of Naples; and in failure of obedience, to come in perſon and render an account of his

his conduct, under pain of excommunication. This bravado was received with contempt, Charles opposing only raillery to the insult: but raillery was not suitable to the state of his affairs; he lost his new kingdom in as short a time as he had gained it. The Neapolitans, whether from national antipathy or just subject of complaint, very soon discovered great enmity against the French, who, on their side, did nothing to merit their affection. The king of Spain, the famous Ferdinand the catholic, the most artful politician of his age, to whom they had given Rousillon and Cerdagne, on condition that he should not meddle in the war, had been busy in it from the beginning of the undertaking, less jealous of his word than of the interest of his house, established on the throne of Naples. Gonsalo of Cordoue, his general, very soon drove the French out, who carried with them no fruit of their conquests, but that shameful malady which is improperly called *morbus gallicus*, and which had been brought from America to Spain in the fleet of Christopher Columbus, and carried into Italy by the Spaniards.

The imprudence of Charles VIII. his inapplication, his amusements, and the lightness of his character, were the principal causes of so sad a reverse; but the cardinal

cardinal Briconet, his minifter, is fufpected of having betrayed him in favour of the pope. No perfon had been more ardent than he for the expedition to Italy, when Alexander defired it; when the pope changed his party, the cardinal, perhaps, changed his fentiments: be that as it will, misfortunes became a leffon for the king. He faw his faults, and endeavoured to repair them; but death did not allow him time: an accidental apoplexy carried him off in his twenty-eighth year. He had had four children by Ann of Britanny, who all died in their infancy. The duke of Orleans was his fucceffor. Under this reign the difcovery of a new world, which had been looked on as a chimera, confounded the prefumptuous ignorance of thofe who denied the Antipodes. Chriftopher Columbus, a Genoefe, with three little Spanifh veffels, had the courage to feek and the glory to find America: he firft difcovered the iflands in the year 1492. Americh Vefpufe, a Florentine merchant, difcovered the Continent fome years afterwards, and gave it his name, lefs worthy of being celebrated than was that of the firft navigator. On the other hand, the Portuguefe opened a new way to the Eaft Indies, by making the tour of Africa. Thefe prodigies of navigation were owing to the compafs,

paſs, which was diſcovered by a Neapolitan towards the end of the fourteenth century. Who would have believed, that a needle, touched with a loadſtone, would be able to conduct fleets beyond what was ſuppoſed to be the limits of the world; and who will dare to ſay, that nature has not ſtill ſome phænomenon in ſtore capable of producing as great effects? The commerce of the Europeans immediately comprehended the whole circumference of the earth; but it is a matter of doubt whether they have gained or loſt by it.

LEWIS XII.

LEWIS XII. ſeemed born for the happineſs of France; humane, generous, and equitable: he had all the experience which could be gained from years and misfortunes: his age was thirty-ſix: his long impriſonment after the battle of St. Aubin had much allayed the heat of his youth. If he was fond of war and of pleaſure, he was ſtill more ſo of his people. From the firſt year of his reign he diminiſhed the taxes, and he ſacrificed his reſentments againſt the lords who had oppoſed

posed him with the greatest obstinacy and vigour. 'The king of France,' said he, 'will never revenge the injuries done to 'the duke of Orleans.' All the world admired this maxim; the greatest part blushed whilst he pardoned them. He took particular care of administering justice with the utmost integrity, of abridging the pleadings of the courts, of establishing good order, and restraining the excess of the students of the university. This body, in spite of the reformation made by Charles VII. preserved the passion for its injurious privileges, opposed these sage rules, and silenced, according to ancient custom, professors and preachers, who, in taking leave of their audience, failed not to inveigh against the king. Such oppositions being already less dangerous than ridiculous, the university was very soon reduced humbly to sue for pardon.

Queen Ann, who, from the death of Charles VIII. had returned to the possession of Britanny, which province was of consequence to Lewis XII. not to lose, his former inclination for this princess was fortified by reasons of state, which gave him an inclination to marry her; but he had already been married a long time to Jane of France, daughter to Lewis XI. who was equally deformed and virtuous. Under pretence that

this

this marriage had been forced, that it had never been consummated, nor ever could, three commissaries of the pope, after a judicial examination, pronounced a sentence of divorce, and the king married Ann of Britanny. Alexander VI. by favouring him in an affair so delicate, consulted equity less than passion. He procured to Cæsar Borgia (his bastard) the dutchy of Valentinois, and an advantageous establishment. Every step of this pontiff had for its object his own interest, and the aggrandizing of his family. He betrayed the king when he thought he could gain by his treason.

If a taste for conquest had not seduced Lewis XII. the kingdom would have become more flourishing and more happy than ever. Unhappily he had claims upon Milan by Valentin Visconti, his grandfather, and he was not willing to renounce the crown of Naples. Chimerical hopes had engaged his predecessors in a fatal war, where the rapidity of his success was followed by quick disgrace. The king having joined the Venetians, to despoil Ludovick Sforza, who had seized on Milan, sent a little army to the other side of the Alps, and in twenty days the Milanese and the Genoese states were conquered. The king made his entry into

Milan; but after his departure, a faction arose among the French, and Ludovick drove him out in a little time. Lewis soon repaired this loss. He returned to Milan, took Ludovick, and carried him to France, where he died.

This first step was a prelude to the conquest of Naples: to assure himself of success in it, Lewis proposed to Ferdinand, the Catholic king, that he should share it with him, and they made a secret treaty in concert with the pope. Gonsalvo Cordoue, as artful as Ferdinand his master, arrived at Naples under pretext of opposing the French; all at once they published the treaty. The king of Spain, according to custom, coloured, with a motive of religion, the most manifest injustice. If he wanted to ruin his relation, it was that he might afterwards make war on the Turks. The unhappy Frederick, king of Naples, overpowered by the French and Spaniards, demanded an asylum in France, and retired thither; while the victors divided his dominions between them. This division was an occasion of dispute, which produced an open war. Gonsalvo, truly worthy (notwithstanding his breach of faith) of the sirname of Great Captain, beat the French, and drove them from place to place, till he had at length taken from them all their conquests.

The

The king endeavoured to re-establish his affairs in Italy; a numerous army which he sent thither gave him the greatest hopes: they all vanished through the fault of the cardinal of Amboise, his minister. This man, hitherto respectable on account of his zeal for the king, a friend of the state, a minister (according to the remark of Mezerai) without pride and without avarice, a cardinal with only one benefice, could not resist the ambition of being pope. Alexander VI. happening to die, being poisoned at a feast, if we may believe common opinion, of the same poison which he had destined for several cardinals, the conclave assembled itself. The French army were at the gates of Rome: Amboise kept it there too long: the Italians persuaded him to draw off the troops, to render his election the more free. He believed them, terror was dissipated, and they elected an Italian pope. Thus the cardinal had the chagrin of being duped, by having neglected the interest of his master.

The rainy season put a stop to military expeditions. Gonsalvo still vanquished the French. It was there that the celebrated knight Bayard stopped himself alone two hundred Spaniards at the foot of a bridge; but the exploits of a particular person could not decide the success of the

war. There had been ſome fruitleſs negociations between Lewis and Ferdinand. The king diſmiſſed the Spaniſh ambaſſadors, after having made complaints of the perfidy of their maſter. One of them having told Ferdinand, that he was reproached by that prince with having betrayed him twice, he replied, ‘By God the drunkard ‘is a liar; I have betrayed him above ten ‘times.’ This anecdote, recorded by Daniel, agrees very well with the conduct of the king of Spain. Never were treaties trifled with in a manner more odious. He had aggrandized himſelf by violence on the ruins of the Mahometan Moors, from whom he had taken the kingdom of Grenada. He employed fraud againſt the Chriſtian princes, always affecting that zeal for religion which renders villany ſo dangerous.

Lewis XII. more ſincere, was much leſs prudent. We can neither conceive nor excuſe the treaty of Blois, by which he promiſes his eldeſt daughter to Charles of Auſtria, afterwards Charles V. grandſon of the emperor Maximilian. Britanny, Burgundy, Milan, and Genoa, were to be the dowry of this princeſs, on condition that the king died without male heirs. Such a diſmembering would have been a mortal wound to France. The ſtates-general, aſſembled at Tours, foreſaw

this misfortune: they represented to the king the inconveniency of the treaty, and the violence which the laws of the kingdom would suffer by the alienation of the dominion. Lewis already repented of the step he had taken. Several people believed that he had engaged his word with a resolution of not keeping it; for the falseness of princes at that time seemed to authorise such an artifice. He agreed to the representation of his state, and gave his daughter to the count of Angouleme, the presumptive heir to the crown.

Genoa, so many times rebellious, revolted anew. Pope Julian II. had blown up this fire. This pontiff, ambitious and a warrior, had thoughts of extending the dominions of the Holy See. After having despoiled Cæsar Borgia, the Machiavelian hero, of the lands which Alexander VI. his father had procured him by criminal contrivances, he endeavoured to drive from Italy all foreign princes; and the power of Lewis excited his hatred as much as his jealousy. The king marched in person to chastise these mutineers. Genoa yielded at discretion. He entered it sword in hand, with all the appearance of a victor who breathes vengeance; but his clemency disarmed him, and he made himself adored by pardoning.

This rapid expedition was followed by the famous league of Cambray, which armed almoſt all Europe againſt one little republic of Italy. Venice, once a little fiſhing place, was become, by induſtry and commerce, a flouriſhing ſtate. As ambition grows with ſtrength, it had aggrandized itſelf at the expence of its neighbours. Pope Julian II. the emperor Maximilian, the king of France, and the king of Spain, in ſpite of their particular diviſions, united to cruſh this commercial republic. Every one complained of ſome uſurpations, and were deſirous of retaking their own. The pope breathed out anathemas, with which the Venetians were not affrighted. Lewis appeared at the head of a formidable army; he was impatient of fighting. It was repreſented to him, that he had to do with a wiſe enemy, againſt whom he could not be too much furniſhed with precautions. 'I will give,' ſaid he, 'ſo many fools to govern them, that all 'their wiſdom ſhall not be able to with-'ſtand.' The French impetuoſity effectually triumphed at the battle of Agnadel. The Venetians were there defeated; and the French immediately ſeized on the greateſt part of their places. They ſeemed loſt without reſource; but the policy of the pope ſaved them. As ſoon as he ſaw himſelf maſter of Romania, having

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that which he deſired, his firſt reſolution was, to deprive others of the fruits of their common league. He pardoned the Venetians to do hurt to his allies. The emperor, whoſe negligence had always loſt favourable occaſions, began to act when there was no more to vanquiſh. The king retook the road to France; Julian tried every method to raiſe up his enemies againſt him, and detached the Swiſs from his alliance, with much leſs trouble; becauſe this people, greedy of money, and becoming neceſſitous, could not obtain the increaſe of their penſions. Lewis, in a fit of choler, expreſſed himſelf with regard to them in terms too little guarded. ‘ It is aſtoniſhing,’ ſaid he, ‘ that theſe ‘ miſerable mountaineers, to whom ſilver ‘ and gold were unknown before my pre- ‘ deceſſors gave it to them, ſhould dare to ‘ make laws for a king of France.’ The Swiſs did not forget theſe indiſcreet words, and very well knew how to revenge themſelves. Julian alſo gained Ferdinand the Catholic king, by inveſting him with the full and entire poſſeſſion of the kingdom of Naples. It was of little conſequence to this prince to violate his faith, provided he could find his profit in ſo doing. Maximilian alone remained faithful to the treaty, becauſe his own intereſt exacted it

of him. Lewis, from this time, looked on the pope as a prince armed againſt him, and Julian was rather more jealous of this quality than the government of the church. He acted as an enemy, not only by negociations, but by all kinds of hoſtilities: nevertheleſs, full of reſpect for the Holy See, the king was not willing to take up arms, without conſulting the clergy of his kingdom. Having aſſembled them at Tours, he propoſed to them in form, a caſe of conſcience, on different queſtions, relative to the conduct which he ſhould hold towards the pope. The anſwers of the clergy were dictated by reaſon and the rights of the people; they determined that the war was lawful, that it was neceſſary to preſerve the pragmatic ſanction, and to ſend no more money to Rome: at the ſame time, they granted a ſubſidy on the eccleſiaſtical eſtates, to maintain the honour of the crown againſt the Roman pontiff. Julian was no leſs fierce and obſtinate; he courageouſly waited for the French army, beſieging Miſandole in perſon, viſiting the trenches, expoſing himſelf to the fire of the cannon, and at laſt entered this place through a breach. While he thus maintained the reputation of a warrior, the king of France and the emperor cited him to appear at a general council con-

voked

voked at Piſa. He on his ſide had convoked one at Rome. He treated with the emperor, with Ferdinand, with the Venetians, and with England: he animated the Swiſs, perſuading them to invade the Milaneſe. The old pope animated all Europe, and without being diſmayed by any thing, purſued the war with a lively vigour. Gaſcon of Foix, duke of Namur, a young prince as wiſe as valiant, commanded the French army. He immortalized himſelf by exploits which produced no ſolid fruit. The battle of Revermo, which he gained, was at the ſame time a misfortune, ſince it coſt him his life. Lewis XII. lamented this event as a prince filled with humanity. 'I would be glad,' ſaid he, 'not to have a grain of land in 'Italy, could I at that price recover to 'life my nephew Gaſcon of Foix, and all 'the brave men who have periſhed with 'him. God preſerve us from ever more 'gaining ſuch victories.' Nevertheleſs, the Swiſs, outrageous at the affront which they had received, penetrated into the very heart of the country of the Milaneſe, who were obliged to abandon places which they had till then kept, and very ſhortly the whole country was left vacant to the Swiſs. It was in vain that the intrepid Bayard, ſirnamed the Fearleſs and Irreproachable Knight,

Knight, and ſeveral other French heroes, did prodigies of valour. The generals diſagreed among themſelves, the king was ſparing of money, he was too far off to take good meaſures, and the confederates had ſuperior forces. An ill-concerted enterpriſe is like to be ruined ſooner or later, notwithſtanding the firſt appearances of ſucceſs.

Ferdinand, after many uſurpations, was ſtill deſirous of taking the kingdom of Navarre from Jane of Albert, a relation and ally of the king of France. Either a real or imaginary bull from Julian, which excommunicated and depoſed Jane as an adherent to the council of Piſa, ſerved as a pretext to this new robbery. To obtain the aſſiſtance of the Engliſh, he fraudulently flattered them with an invaſion of Guienne. The kingdom of Navarre, conquered by his arms and his intrigues, has ever ſince been an appendage to the crown of Spain. M. de Voltaire ſays, that he was called in Spain the wiſe, the prudent; in Italy the pious; in France and London the perfidious. His actions will decide to which of the titles he had moſt claim. The bull was not to be found by which he pretended a right of uſurping the dominions of his neighbour; but Julian was of a character to renew the enterpriſes of

Gregory

Gregory VII. and Innocent III. He not only threw an interdiction on the kingdom, and anathematised the pragmatic sanction, but he solicited the king of England, Henry VIII. to turn all his forces against France, promising him the deposition of Lewis, and the crown.

Europe was delivered in 1513 from this audacious pope: 'A man,' says Daniel, 'who 'had greater talents for the government of 'any other state than that of the church.' The cardinal of Medicis succeeded him under the name of Leo X. The French, commanded by Lewis of Tremoille, returned to the Milanese, and made a new conquest as rapid and as fruitless as the preceding. The Swiss, without artillery, without cavalry, attacked Tremoille at Navarre, fighting with a prodigious valour, and gained the victory. Milan was retaken, and Genoa revolted, as it had always done in like circumstances. Machiavel, cited by M. Henault, observes, that Lewis XII. was guilty of five capital faults in Italy: he ruined the weak; he increased the power of the strong; he introduced a stranger who did not make it his residence; and he sent thither no colonies. The politic Machiavel supposes, perhaps too lightly, that colonies could be established in so few years, and in such turbulent times.

times. All theſe misfortunes, by weakening the kingdom, increaſed the audacity of their enemies. Henry VIII. king of England, who had formed a league with the pope, made an irruption in Picardy, having with him the emperor Maximilian, whoſe troops he paid, and to whom he gave a crown a day for his table. So much need or avarice degraded this emperor. The French were put to the rout at Guinegate, which is called the Day of Spurs, becauſe that day they were more uſeful to our ſoldiers than their ſwords. Bayard being at length obliged to yield to numbers, briſkly attacked a knight of the enemy's army, and having diſarmed him, immediately ſurrendered himſelf to his party. In a few days he demanded his liberty; 'and your ranſom,' ſaid the knight; 'and yours,' replied Bayard; 'for I have 'made you my priſoner.' Henry VIII. and the emperor decided this diſpute in favour of the French hero. This anecdote appears remarkable, as it ſhews the ſpirit of ancient chivalry.

The battle of Guinegate loſt Terouane and Tournay; but the greateſt danger was in Burgundy. Dijou was beſieged by the Swiſs, and terror ſpread itſelf even to Paris. Dijou was ſaved only by the addreſs of Lewis of Tremoille, governor of Burgundy, who

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at length engaged the Swiſs to raiſe the ſiege, promiſing them all that they could wiſh, and more than they had power to grant. The king, charmed with this event, affected to complain of the governor, and refuſed to ratify the treaty. The Swiſs being departed, and winter approaching, they had time to take precautions againſt another invaſion. During theſe tranſactions, queen Anne of Britanny died. Through a ſcruple as natural to her ſex as to her piety, ſhe had often teazed the king on the ſubject of the war with the pope; and, according to ſome authors, her importunate repreſentations hurt the affairs in Italy. The hope of having a ſon, and the neceſſity of weakening a too formidable league, determined Lewis upon a new marriage. He obtained the ſiſter of Henry VIII.; but inſtead of receiving a dowry, it coſt him a million of crowns. The king of England enraged againſt Ferdinand the Catholic, his father-in-law, who had often deceived him as well as others, revenged himſelf by this alliance. A league formed offenſive and defenſive with the Engliſh, put Lewis XII. in a ſituation of repairing his misfortunes. He made great preparations for war, when a violent diſorder carried him off in the fifty-ſixth year of his age. His paſſion for his

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young queen had abridged his days. 'The good king,' ſays Bayard's hiſtorian, 'to pleaſe his wife, had changed entirely 'his manner of living; for when, accord-'ing to his uſual cuſtom, he ſhould have 'dined at eight o'clock, he deferred 'dining till twelve; and, inſtead of going 'to bed at ſix o'clock in the evening, he 'often ſtaid up till midnight.' We may ſee how different the cuſtoms of theſe times were from ours.

Lewis XII. deſerved and received from the nation the greateſt title that a king could bear, the name of Father of his People. He leſſened the taxes almoſt one half. Never had he exacted new ſubſidies but to defray the expences of a war. If he employed a reſource dangerous, and till then unknown, the making merchandiſe of places, he did not extend it to the offices of judicature: they were not to be purchaſed. The dignities of the robe were given only to merit. It was a cuſtom, that the parliament ſhould preſent three perſons for a vacant place, and that the king ſhould name one: thus being choſen from among the moſt celebrated advocates, they had, in ſome degree, acquired a right of judging, by virtue of their diſtinguiſhing knowledge.

Lewis

Lewis is ſometimes reproached with a falſe œconomy. He had better, without doubt, have increaſed the penſions of the Swiſs, and have ſent more money into Italy; but the fear of oppreſſing his ſubjects glorioufly juſtifies him from ſuch a reproach. With a revenue of thirteen millions of livres, equal to about fifty of the preſent time, he ſupported the majeſty of the throne, and furniſhed every thing that was wanting. The ſtate was not in debt, plenty reigned in the provinces, juſtice was done in a ſhort time, and almoſt without expences; for the fees were forty times leſs than they are now. By the edict of 1499, it is ordered, that the law ſhould always be followed, in ſpite of orders contrary to the law which importunity might extort from the king: an admirable maxim, which, in ſecuring the public tranquillity, could not but confirm the ſovereign authority. The peaſants were preſerved from the violence of ſoldiers. An example was made of ſome of the gendarmes, and the reſt returned to their duty. If Lewis was neither a great hero nor a great politician, (according to the remarks of M. de Voltaire) he had, however, the more deſirable glory of being a good king, and his memory will be ever bleſſed by his poſterity.

FRANCIS I.

FRANCIS count of Angouleme was great grandſon of the duke of Orleans, who was aſſaſſinated by the duke of Burgundy. The crown belonged to him as firſt prince of the blood. His underſtanding, his talents, his courage, the greatneſs of his ſoul, all contributed to make him worthy of it. He had faults which drew on him great misfortunes. A fortunate and politic rival, whoſe ſucceſs obſcured his glory; but he ſhone even in misfortune, and the memorable events of his reign made an epocha as much more intereſting, as they produced a revolution in the opinions of mankind. A king of twenty-one years old, full of fire and confidence, eager of reputation, born with the genius of war, having the appearance and the ſentiments of an hero, would naturally deliver himſelf to the deſire of conqueſt and victory.

Lewis had made preparations for a new expedition in Milan; Francis reſolved to make uſe of them. The advice of the chancellor Prat furniſhed him with a reſource for amaſſing money: a reſource, which one would believe rather invented

by an Italian negociator, than by a chief juſtice; it was that of ſelling the poſts of judicature. They created ſeveral in the parliament of Paris, and thoſe of other places; and the moſt important of the functions began, from this time, to become venal. This abuſe, joined to an increaſe of taxes, preſaged a reign leſs equitable than the former.

After having ſigned treaties of peace with Henry VIII. the Venetians, and Charles of Auſtria, (whom we ſhall ſoon ſee menace France) the young king paſſed the Alps, and invaded the Milaneſe. The Swiſs, who then took the title of the pope's protectors, excited by the cardinal of Siam, attacked him all at once, though he was then in treaty with them. They loſt the famous battle of Marignan: victory was diſputed two days. Francis made himſelf admired among a crowd of heroes: he paſſed the night upon a battery of cannon, not above fifty paces from a battalion of the enemy. The duke of Bourbon, the conſtable, acquired an immortal glory, which he afterwards ſullied by his rebellion. Never had the Swiſs ſhewed themſelves ſo eager for combat; their long pikes formed a rampart almoſt inacceſſible. In ſpite of this defeat, which had coſt them more than ten thouſand men, they offered to the duke of Milan, Maximilian

 S'force,

S'force, to defend him to the laſt extremity, if he would pay their ſoldiery. His inability of doing this furniſhed them with a pretext of drawing off, and the Milaneſe very ſoon ſubmitted to the law of the victor.

The combat of the giants, which was the name given to the Day of Marignan by the old marſhal of Trivulce, who had been in eighteen battles, gained to Francis I. the reputation of the moſt valiant prince in Europe. Leon X. as ambitious, but more ſupple and more the friend of peace than his fierce predeceſſor, deſired an accommodation; for which purpoſe he failed not to flatter the king, and pretended to approve the deſign which he had of conquering Naples. One of the greateſt objects of his policy was, that of annihilating the pragmatic ſanction. They agreed to ſuppreſs it, and ſought expedients to accompliſh their purpoſe. The intereſts of the two courts were managed with much art in the agreement, by which the nomination of biſhops and abbots was left to the king, who was to preſent to the pope the ſubjects which he had named. Reſerves and expectatives were aboliſhed on both ſides. The ſuperiority of the general council over the pope was paſſed over in ſilence. This treaty, the only means, perhaps, of re-eſtabliſhing good intelligence

with

with the court of Rome, met in France with the most lively opposition. The greatest part of the people were angry to see the decrees of the councils of Bale and of Constance brought to nothing, the canonical elections again suppressed, and annates restored to the court of Rome; for they agreed in this point without inserting it in the concordat, and it has always subsisted from that time. The clergy, the parliament, the university, all rose in concert against a law so opposite to the French maxims: the king spoke as an absolute master, and they obeyed. If policy could have disputed with the pope the money of the kingdom, it was, it seems, less able to dispute with the king the nomination of the great benefices; a custom which had been established under the first race, though contrary to ancient discipline. Ambition and intrigue rendered the elections subject to an infinite abuse; and bishops being considerable lords of fiefs, the public tranquillity, perhaps, demanded that they should be chosen by the sovereign. The Swiss also entered into a treaty with Francis: they sold him their alliance dear; but they had but too well proved how much their enmity was to be feared.

In the mean time, Charles V. began to excite the jealousy of a king twenty years older

than himſelf. He was heir to his two grandfathers, Ferdinand the catholic king, and the emperor Maximilian. In a tender age, with a ſolid underſtanding, cultivated by the beſt education, he had already given himſelf up to buſineſs, and was capable of the greateſt things. Ferdinand died in 1516. We muſt obſerve here, that a Spaniſh hiſtorian praiſes him in ſpite of his perfidy and perjuries, ſaying, 'That he 'knew better than all other princes how 'to reconcile the law of God with the rea-'ſons of ſtate.' It is thus that the prejudices of a nation will ſometimes give the lie to true hiſtory. The young Charles, already poſſeſſor of the Low Countries, became by his death king of Spain, of Naples, and of Sicily. Maximilian, much leſs powerful, who had had the ambition of being pope, and who had never ceaſed to undertake without being able to execute, finiſhed his laborious career, and left him Auſtria, with the hope of being elected emperor. Francis I. wiſhed for this dignity; he employed intrigue and money to aſſure himſelf of the ſuffrage: the pope favoured him in appearance, and endeavoured underhand to exclude both the candidates, whoſe power in Italy he equally dreaded. The electors fearing to give a maſter to Germany, found it diffi-

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cult to decide either for one or the other; but it was neceſſary to have an emperor who would reſtrain the power of the Turks. Charles V. was preferred, becauſe the diſtance of his dominions, though large, gave the leaſt umbrage to the Germanic liberty. They did not foreſee that the empire would become hereditary in his houſe, and that it might aſpire to univerſal monarchy. Before the election, the two rivals had affected to appear cordially united. Francis I. ſaid, 'That Charles's 'being a candidate did not at all offend 'him; that they both made their court to 'the ſame miſtreſs; that the moſt fortu-'nate would carry her; and that the other 'muſt be content.' This generous ſentiment, however, gave way either to chagrin or policy. The firſt care of the monarch was, to attach the king of England to him, and to make him an ally againſt the emperor. He propoſed an interview near Calais: they met each other with all the magnificence poſſible. This interview, called the Field of Cloth of Gold, becauſe Francis was in a tent covered with gold cloth, produced nothing more than feaſts and uſeleſs expences. Charles V. knew how to prevent its having any other effects. As ſoon as the two kings were ſeparated, he went over into England in

in order to gain cardinal Wolſey to his intereſt; a miniſter, whoſe ſoul was as baſe as his birth, and who always ſelling to the beſt bidder, forgot the liberality of the king as ſoon as he hoped to be better paid by the emperor. This cardinal governed Henry VIII. and very ſoon raiſed to France a neceſſary ally. On the other ſide, Leon X. leſs occupied by the duties of a common father than the pleaſures and temporal intereſts of his ſee, far from inſpiring theſe two princes with concord, ſowed the ſeeds of diviſion between them. Being willing that they ſhould mutually weaken each other by war, he at firſt promiſed to Charles V. the poſſeſſion of the kingdom of Naples, notwithſtanding the ancient law of the popes, which ſays, 'That no king 'of Naples ſhall ever be emperor.' Afterwards, by a ſecret treaty, he promiſed Francis I. to refuſe this inveſtiture, and to leave him at liberty to attack Naples, under conditions that tended to aggrandize the eccleſiaſtical ſtate. Some time after, leſs jealous of the character of a good man than that of a ſubtile politician, he declared himſelf for the emperor, whoſe offers were the moſt advantageous. The king began, without doubt, to repent of having made the agreement; for it is certain, that he had the ſtrongeſt reaſon ſo to do. "The

French

French took the advantage of the diſtance of Charles V. to retake Navarre, and loſt it almoſt as ſoon as taken. War began to appear in all the extremities of the kingdom. The Milaneſe was again wreſted from France; the pope and the emperor re-eſtabliſhed there the houſe of S'forza. This revolution appeared inevitable. Lautrec, governor of the country, had drawn on himſelf the hatred of the people and the nobility, by the exceſs of his pride and ſeverity. The king ſent no more money, diſſipating in vain expences the revenues of the ſtate. As much as Lewis XII. had managed his ſubjects, and as much œconomy as he had ſhewn in the adminiſtration of his finances, ſo much did Francis neglect this eſſential part of government. With ſuch a conduct, could he ſupport a conqueſt expoſed to ſo many ſtorms? It is ſaid, that Leon X. died of joy when he learned our misfortunes. The faults of this voluptuous pontiff cannot tarniſh the glory which he deſerved in making ſcience and the fine arts flouriſh, through his protection. His ſucceſſor was Achien VI. preceptor to Charles V. who is eternally reproached with having diſdained letters, after being by their means raiſed to the higheſt fortune. Lautrec, abandoned by the Swiſs for want of

money, and ſeeing his affairs deſperate in Italy, returned to court. Francis reproached him on the loſs of Milan: he replied with firmneſs, 'That the king was 'himſelf the cauſe; that the ſoldiers had 'ſerved eighteen months without touching a penny from the treaſury; that 'the Swiſs had not been paid; that in 'fact the government ought to impute to 'itſelf their defection, and all the miſ'fortunes of the war.' The king, who had given orders to Semblancai, ſuperintendant of the finances, to ſend this general four hundred thouſand crowns, ordered him ſoon after to be arreſted. Semblancai in vain proteſted, that Madam de Angouleme, the monarch's mother, had ſeized on this money. They employed commiſſaries to judge him: the proſecution was long in coming to an iſſue; but at length the miniſter was condemned to be hanged, and the ſentence executed at Montfaucon. He was not the firſt ſuperintendant who had ſubmitted to the ſame fate. He was a reſpectable old man; a victim, perhaps, to the avarice of Madam Angouleme, and to the jealouſy of the chancellor du Prat, who mortally hated him. The innocent are always weak againſt ſuch enemies.

The pope, the emperor, the king of England, Ferdinand archduke of Auſtria, the

duke

duke of Milan, the Florentines, the Venetians, and the Genoese, all entered into a league against France. A confederacy so formidable was less fatal than the rebellion of the constable of Bourbon. This prince had acquired the chief glory of the battle of Marignan. The greatest services are sometimes returned by injury and hatred: far from being recompensed as he had deserved, all occasions had been taken of mortifying him. To fill up the measure of his misfortunes, the queen-mother became enamoured of him: she made him proposals of marriage, and resented a refusal. The passion of a vindictive woman, whose power was great at court, was not easily moderated: chancellor du Prat was the engine of her vengeance. They disputed with the constable the right he had to the house of Bourbon, under pretence that he was not descended from the elder branch in a direct line. This law-suit, founded on chicanery rather than justice, was given against him. The solicitation of Madam Angouleme gained an arrest of parliament to sequester the estate of the constable. This reduced to despair a man, whom it was of the greatest consequence to the nation to have kept in good-humour. He immediately treated with the emperor. The king being advised of it, might have se-

cured his person; but through an affected candour, of which he was often the dupe, he continued to put confidence in the constable, who gave him the finest words, and seized the first occasion of flying. Gui Chardin recounts, that a Spanish lord refused to let this illustrious fugitive be lodged in his palace. 'I can refuse nothing to your Majesty,' said he, to Charles V. who asked it of him; 'but I declare to you, that if the duke of Bourbon lodges in my house, I will burn it as soon as he comes out of it, as a place infected with perfidy, and consequently for ever unworthy of being inhabited by people of honour.'

So many enemies leagued against Francis I. did not deprive him of his courage. He had employed every means to procure resources, which the dissipation of the finances had rendered necessary, even so much as to seize upon a grating of massy silver, worth about seven thousand marks, with which the prodigal devotion of Lewis XI. had adorned the tomb of St. Martin. He was desirous of going into Italy; but fearing that the revolt of the constable would cause some insurrection in the kingdom, he satisfied himself with sending thither admiral de Bonivet, who overset every thing. Fortunately for him, his

enemies,

enemies did not ſucceed better in Picardy, in Flanders, or in Spain. The French defended themſelves at home, and were beaten beyond the Alps. Bonivet, too inferior to cope with a number of confederates, and with the genius of the marquis Peſcaire, John of Medicis, and the conſtable, their three generals, being abandoned by the Swiſs, attacked in his retreat from Bagraſſat, and wounded in the firſt charge, loſt all hope of conqueſt. The chevalier Bayard received alſo a mortal wound: they ſet him at the foot of a tree; he there made his confeſſion to a gentleman who followed him. The duke of Bourbon arrived juſt at that time, teſtifying his eſteem and compaſſion. 'I do not re-'quire your pity,' ſaid Bayard to him, 'I 'die an honeſt man; but I pity you who 'fight againſt your king, your country, 'and your oaths.' Thus died this great man, an able and valiant commander, worthy of leading armies, who, notwithſtanding, was never chief in command, becauſe he was too little a courtier to unite glory and fortune.

Charles V. after the advantage which he had gained in Italy, was willing to make an irruption into France. The duke of Bourbon, who had inſpired him with this deſign, was deſirous of penetrating

into the heart of the kingdom; but they began with the ſiege of Marſeilles. The efforts of the conſtable and of Peſcaire, were not able to reduce this place. They decamped very much diſcontented with each other, the fierceneſs of the Italian having ſeveral times humbled the rebellious prince. The duke of Bourbon had aſſured him, that three ſtrokes of cannon would ſo terrify the Marſeillians, that they would come with a rope about their necks, and bring them the keys of the city. One day ſome people were killed in the ſame tent with Peſcaire by a cannon ball. The conſtable running out at the noiſe of this accident, demanded what was the matter; 'Here are,' replied Peſcaire, 'the conſuls of Marſeilles, 'who have brought us the keys of the 'city.' If Francis I. had heard the advice of the wiſeſt of his council, he would have avoided the misfortunes which awaited him in Italy. His imprudence drew him over the mountains, and he there committed irreparable faults. Always directed by the admiral de Bonivet, whoſe advice was never otherwiſe than pernicious, he beſieged Pavia, contrary to the opinions of the veteran officers, and he weakened his army by making a diverſion on the ſide of Naples. While Pavia vigorouſly reſiſted him, the duke of Bourbon reaſſembled

bled his ſcattered troops in Germany, and brought them up. The enemy offered him battle; a falſe ſhame hindered the king from raiſing the ſiege, and Bonivet confirmed him in the reſolution of fighting. This fatal battle reſembled thoſe of Poitiers and Agincourt. The king, after having killed with his own hands ſeven or eight men, ſurrendered himſelf a priſoner to Pomperan, the only French officer who had followed the conſtable. Pomperan had the glory of ſaving him from the fury of the ſoldiers, and of making him priſoner. The monarch received the duke of Bourbon his victor with kindneſs; but he ought to have reproached himſelf in a lively manner, for having ever made himſelf ſuch an enemy. He wrote to the ducheſs of Angouleme, his mother, the regent of the kingdom, in theſe terms: 'Madam, every thing is loſt except honour.' A letter worthy of a vanquiſhed hero. Diſgrace could not be ſupported with more dignity. The emperor learning this news, affected a moderation which was far from real. He would not permit any public rejoicings, ſaying, 'A victory gained over Chriſtians ought to excite nothing but grief.' When any one makes a ſhew of theſe fine ſentiments, it ought to be ſupported by a ſuitable conduct. This veil

veil of modesty covered the pride and ambition of Charles V. The bishop of Osme, his confessor, had represented to him the glory which he would acquire in entering into a treaty with the king on reasonable terms: on the contrary, he proposed such very hard ones, as honour would not permit the other to accept. He insisted, that the French king should restore Burgundy to him, as a dominion which had been usurped from his house; that he should yield Provence and Dauphiny to the duke of Bourbon, for him to possess under the title of a kingdom; that he should renounce all his pretensions on Italy; and that he should satisfy the king of England by giving back the provinces of France, of which he had pretended to recover the possession. The reply of the king was conformable to the greatness of his soul; he protested, that he would rather finish his days in prison, than thus tear his kingdom to pieces; adding, that if he was cowardly enough to do it, his subjects would have more spirit than to submit.

Charles V. with his ambitious pretensions, one would have imagined, would have invaded France, and have engaged Henry VIII. to have carried fire and sword into it; but instead of profiting by this victory, he remained quiet at Madrid. He no longer

longer had the ſame intimacy with Henry and Wolſey which had formerly ſubſiſted betwixt them; he blaſted their vanity in its meridian, and detached himſelf entirely from their intereſts. Meanwhile, regret at impriſonment, and the danger of France, had made the mind of Francis I. more flexible: he was at length willing to come into ſome of the conditions which were offered him, in order to draw himſelf out of the hands of his enemy, perſuaded that honour and conſcience would allow him to break the promiſes which violence had forced from him. The emperor, who demanded to be put in poſſeſſion of Burgundy before the releaſe of the king, relaxed on this point, which they were not weak enough to agree to. By the treaty concluded at Madrid, Francis ceded Burgundy, and his rights of ſovereignty over Artois, Flanders, &c. He engaged to return to priſon, in caſe Burgundy was not reſtored in ſix weeks. His two ſons were to remain as hoſtages, or elſe the dauphin, attended by a number of the chief people of the kingdom. In a word, the emperor ſecured to himſelf every advantage which he could reap from the ſituation of affairs. Marks of friendſhip were mutually laviſhed betwixt them, the falſity of which very ſoon appeared. At the ſame time that the illu-

ſtrious

ſtrious priſoner returned to France, his two ſons were delivered to the Spaniards. The queen-regent, by her courage and extraordinary preſence of mind, choſe rather to expoſe them both, than to give as hoſtages with the dauphin, the great men who were the reſource of the ſtate. Before this treaty was ſigned, Francis had taken the uſeleſs precaution of making a ſecret proteſtation againſt it. He did not loſe a moment in publickly diſplaying his intentions: ſummoned to execute his promiſe, he replied, 'That this affair intereſting 'the whole kingdom, could not be finiſh-'ed but in concert with the States-general; 'and above all, with the States of Bur-'gundy.' The Burgundians repreſented to him, that he had no right to alienate a domain of the crown, which the oath taken at his coronation bound him to keep; that in ſuch circumſtances, ſubjects were not obliged to keep to their obedience; and that they would rather periſh than come under a foreign yoke. The ambaſſador of Charles V. ſeeing himſelf trifled with, inſiſted upon the parole that the king had given, of returning into Spain: but he eluded this demand, complaining of the violence and injuſtice of the emperor; offering, nevertheleſs, two millions of gold inſtead of the dutchy of Burgundy,

Burgundy, for the ranſom of his children. He had already engaged by treaty with Clement VII. (the ancient Clement VII. not being reckoned amongſt the legitimate popes) with the king of England, and the Venetians, to give liberty to Italy, and to re-eſtabliſh Francis S'force in Milan. Thus every thing changes with the change of events. He who had ruined S'force became all on a ſudden his defender. By a ſingular fatality, the pope was the victim of this league. The duke of Bourbon, to whom the emperor had promiſed the inveſtiture of the dutchy of Milan, completed the conqueſt of it. Wanting money to pay his troops, he conducted them to Rome, that they might be ſatisfied by the pillage of it. In giving the aſſault to this city, he received a mortal ſtroke, and periſhed at thirty-eight years old, with all the glory of a hero, and all the ignominy of a rebel. Rome was inhumanly ſacked, Clement VII. was made the priſoner of Charles V. who put on mourning at this victory; but, nevertheleſs, exacted four hundred thouſand ducats of the pontiff for his ranſom.

Meanwhile, the negociations concerning the treaty of Madrid being ineffectual, Francis I. and Henry VIII. ſolemnly declared war againſt the emperor, who accuſed

cused the king of France with having broken his word; and declared, that he would prove this charge against him hand to hand. His rival, in a writing signed with his own hand, gave him the lie in his throat, and summoned him to appoint a field for a single combat. They abided by these mutual defiances of each other, which were unworthy of the majesty of two great princes. But war was made in Italy with new fury. Lautrec besieged Naples, which defended itself more than three months; the plague was in the army, and destroyed the general; Andrew Doria, whose gallies had beaten those of the emperor, betrayed the French in Genoa; Naples was delivered; and Milan was not conquered. These miserable wars in Italy, undertaken through the ambition of kings, answered no other purpose than to depopulate the kingdom. At length peace was made at Cambray: the plenipotentiaries were two women, the dutchess of Angouleme for Francis I. and for Charles V. Margaret of Austria, governess of the Low Countries. This was the same Margaret whom Charles VIII. was to have married, and who was sent back into Flanders. The emperor desisted from his attempts upon Burgundy, referring his pretensions to a judicial determination.

The

The king renounced all ſovereignty over Flanders and Artois, and promiſed two millions of gold crowns for the ranſom of his children. The finances were exhauſted as much by pleaſure as war: Henry VIII. furniſhed money. The divorce which he was deſirous of making with Catherine of Arragon, the emperor's aunt, that he might be at liberty to marry Anne Boleyn, the daughter of a private gentleman, was a motive for uniting himſelf more cloſely with Francis I. He had need of his ſuccours againſt Charles V. and he gave himſelf hopes, that the ſuffrages of the univerſity would be in favour of this divorce. The Sorbonne in effect decided, that his marriage was null, though it had been allowed for many years by the diſpenſation of Julian II. becauſe it was not lawful that a woman ſhould ſucceſſively marry two brothers. Catherine of Arragon having been married firſt to the brother of Henry VIII. who died almoſt as ſoon as the ceremony was over, and the marriage having never (according to general opinion at leaſt) been conſummated, the pope had permitted Henry to marry the widow. It would have been reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the children, who were the conſequence of their union, would have ſecured

the mother from an attempt to diſſolve her marriage as illegal: but nothing could moderate the paſſions of the king of England; reſolved on this divorce, he uſed every means of making Clement VII. conſent to it. Already the bull which he ſolicited had arrived in London; but Charles V. broke all his meaſures: the legate had orders to burn this bull, and the affair was to be tried at Rome. Theſe delays and difficulties contrived by the pope, irritated the deſires of the amorous prince: he married Anne Boleyn. Clement, ready to launch his thunders againſt him, fixed him a term for anſwering and declaring his laſt reſolution. Henry VIII. who had written againſt Luther, by which he had gained the glorious title of defender of the church, was not willing to break with Rome: unfortunately his courier did not arrive till the day that had been fixed was paſt, and they made haſte to fulminate the excommunication. Two days after, however, the anſwer arrived, which might have calmed the pontiff; but the blow was already ſtruck, and the evil without remedy. Henry ſeparated for ever from the church of Rome, and eſtabliſhed himſelf chief of religion in England. This precipitation of Clement VII. was the more imprudent,

as the heresy of Luther had already raised a great part of Europe against the Holy See.

It is necessary here to give a sketch of a revolution which embraced so many interesting objects, and the circumstances of which are so essential to our history.

Leo X. in 1517, being in want of money, whether for the war which he was preparing against the Turks, or whether for the construction of the magnificent church of St. Peter, had recourse to an expedient which was then too often abused. He caused indulgences to be preached. The Dominicans were charged with this commission in Germany, to the prejudice of the Augustines, to whom it belonged by ancient custom. The manner in which they distributed these spiritual graces much resembled a public sale: they had indulgence-offices even in their inns. The avarice of the collectors did not leave them leisure to save appearances; and the pope himself was suspected of converting part of the alms to his own profit. This abuse alone would have excited some murmurs, if the resentment of the Augustines had not been of itself sufficient. One of them, a bold, zealous, eloquent man, full of pride and hatred, undertook to revenge his order: he breathed invectives against the Dominicans, spared not the disorders of the court

court of Rome or the clergy; and, above all, he attacked the ſcandalous traffic of indulgences. A theological war, from however ſmall a beginning, always becomes important, when an enthuſiaſt finds zealous ſectaries and puiſſant adverſaries. Luther began by abuſe: he very ſoon advanced to tenets. Free-will, juſtification, indulgences, purgatory, the ſacraments, and authority of the pope and the church, &c. exerciſed his temerity. He made bold diſcuſſions, which conduced to heretical aſſertions. His party increaſed daily, as ſuperſtition, joined to irregularity of manners, had introduced into the church a number of palpable diſorders, which had, for a long time, demanded reformation. It was eaſy to confound the Catholic religion with theſe abuſes, which ſtill found ſuperſtitious apologiſts: and moreover, the ſeducing charms of liberty captivated the people, and flattered their ſelf-love, by ſubjecting received doctrines to a new examination. The art of printing had multiplied copies of the Holy Scriptures; and they fortified themſelves in error by many difficult texts, of which the church only could fix the ſenſe. Though Luther rejected confeſſion and abſtinence, he laid down ideas of perfection and rigour, which are always capable of making novelties

respectable. In fine, the princes found great advantage in ſeizing upon the property of the church, and in no more enriching Rome at the expence of their eſtates. Leo X. ought to have ſtifled theſe ſeeds of ſchiſm by gaining over Luther; but he deſpiſed him, and excommunicated him in 1520. But this proud theologian, ſupported by the duke of Saxony, was now become an irreconcilable enemy to popery. Saxony, Heſſe, Brunſwick, Denmark, and Sweden, all threw off the yoke. Zuinglius added to the errors of Luther, and drew after him the greateſt part of Switzerland. A ſhort time after, Genoa embraced theſe new opinions. One ſingle monk was the author of this prodigious change. When we reflect on the greatneſs of his abuſe againſt Leo X. whom he called little popeling little pope; when we reflect on the abſurd manner in which he aboliſhed private maſſes, aſſuring the world, that the devil had appeared to him, and had proved that theſe maſſes were idolatry, it is not poſſible to attribute the birth of proteſtantiſm to the progreſs of literature; it ſeems rather to be the fruit of barbarity and fanaticiſm. Unfortunately they had furniſhed too much matter to the falſe declamations of Luther, and his ſucceſs made them ſufficiently

ciently feel the wrong which superstition and ignorance had done to truth. Charles V. was desirous at once to restrain the Lutherans, and take advantage of these troubles, to subdue the princes of Germany. But the diet of Spier, in 1529, rendered a decree in favour of ancient religion useless: the reformed church protested against this decree, and from thence took the name of Protestants. They formed a league against the emperor, who was desirous of ruining them, fearing now that they would join the Turks, whose arms threatened the empire. He granted them liberty of conscience, and with their succours set Soliman at defiance.

These troubles were favourable to the policy of Francis I. By a whimsical contrast, he burnt the heretics of his own kingdom, at the same time that he entered into a league with the heretics of Germany. The schism of Henry VIII. gave him occasion to complain of Clement VII. and he hinted one day to the nuncio, that they should shortly follow in France the example of England. 'Freely, Sire,' replied the nuncio; 'you will be the first hurt by 'it. A new religion among a people 'demands afterwards a change of the 'prince.' If this maxim was not always verified, at least it was very soon proved, that

that a change of religion could produce cabals and fury. Though, by the treaty of Madrid and Cambray, the king had renounced the dutchy of Milan, he always attempted to renew his claims when he could find any means of doing it. Francis S'force furnished him with a subject of war, by cutting off the head of the French ambassador, because his people had killed an Italian gentleman.

S'force died; the king, not having yielded Milan in his favour, hesitated not loudly to declare his designs; he demanded possession of it for the duke of Orleans, his second son. The emperor at first promised it; but afterwards evaded that promise, lengthening out the affair from time to time, and at length offering to agree, that they should demand it for the duke of Angouleme, the youngest son of France. He pretended that Italy would be endangered if Milan belonged to the duke of Orleans, who, from Catherine of Medicis, his wife, had pretensions on the dukedoms of Urban and Florence. Proud of his expedition in Africa, from whence he had come a conqueror of the celebrated Barbarossa, Soliman's general, he affected an imperious haughtiness with regard to Francis I. He declaimed against him in the hall of the consistory, and carried his insult so far as to

to ſay, ‘ That if his captains and ſoldiers ‘ reſembled thoſe of his enemy, he would ‘ tie a cord round his own neck, and de- ‘ mand mercy from his enemy's hand.’ He employed artifice to render the ſame prince odious, whom he had once loaded with flattery. All Germany was filled with maniſeſtos, where the king was accuſed of having treated with Barbaroſſa againſt the emperor. Italy retained the predictions which promiſed the kingdom of France to the emperor. He promiſed it to himſelf; and before he ſet out for this conqueſt, he told his hiſtorian, Paul Jove, to prepare plenty of paper and ink, that he might ſufficiently tax the manufacture of their hands. It would have been wiſer done, according to the remark of Mr. Henault, to have waited the event Ready to enter into Provence, which, through the perfidy of the marquis of Saluces, had opened its gates to him, he aſked a French gentleman, How many days there were before he ſhould get to Paris? ‘ Of days!’ replied the Frenchman; ‘ If you mean by this word Battles, I ‘ aſſure you that you have not leſs than ‘ a dozen at leaſt; and that the aggreſ- ‘ ſors will be the firſt beaten.’ The marſhal of Montmorency, directed by the king's orders, ſaved Provence. He had ravaged the whole country, leaving

nothing

nothing but vines and trees, the fruits of which would be the caufe of ficknefs to the imperialifts. Intrenched in a camp near Avignon, he would not hazard a doubtful battle. Nothing could be more wife than thefe meafures. The great army of Charles V. was foon deftroyed by famine and ficknefs; he prefented himfelf before Marfeilles and before Arles, without being able to befiege them. In fine, he repaffed the Alps, haraffed in a lively manner by the country peafants. The Flemings fucceeded no better in Picardy; the fiege of Peronne was raifed, after feveral affaults, fupported with an admirable valour.

During the courfe of thefe fortunate events, the dauphin died of the effects of poifon. They arrefted his cupbearer, who was an Italian; he confeffed himfelf guilty of this crime, and fufpicions at the fame time fell on the emperor. A hateful violence rendered him liable to fuch accufations. It is fcarcely credible, that the moft powerful fovereign in Europe fhould be cited to Paris as a vaffal guilty of felony. It however happened; under pretence that the emperor had violated the treaty of Cambray, and that confequently the ceffion of the rights of fovereignty over Artois and Flanders became null. The parliament, who

who looked on themſelves as princes and their peers, declared Charles of Auſtria notoriouſly attainted of felony, and his counties of Flanders and Artois confiſcated and reunited to the crown. This act of authority too much reſembled the laſt bravadoes of Charles V. which they had turned into ridicule, from the time of his expedition to Provence. What power in the world could produce an arreſt againſt the emperor? They were willing, without doubt, to teach him, that he had done wrong, by inſulting his enemy.

The king took a much more uſeful ſtep in making ſo powerful an alliance as that of Soliman. Theſe ſort of alliances had, till now, been looked on as unworthy of the Chriſtian profeſſion, in ſpite of the example which had been given by Alexander VI. Francis was complained of bitterly at the ſame time, for the turbulent ſcenes in Germany, in order to render him odious as a friend of the Turks; but policy ſets aſide that imputation. Chriſtians, Mahometans, Catholics and Heretics, ought certainly to be united by the cloſe bonds of nature. The greateſt crime is, the uniting a part together, in order to ruin others. If religion could not diſarm the Chriſtian princes, is it aſtoniſhing that intereſt ſhould have an effect on the infidels?

In conſequence of this treaty, Barbaroſſa was to attack Naples, while the French army invaded Milan. The Turk kept his word; but the king arrived too late to ſecond him. Italy would now have drawn near a fatal revolution, if the two princes had acted in concert. The emperor, meanwhile, ſeemed to ſhew no averſion for peace, and concluded with the king a truce of ten years. They met at Aigues Mortes, and there ſhewed all the marks of a perfect reconciliation; whether it was really ſo or not, actions alone could prove: an occaſion for doing which preſented itſelf very ſhortly. The Gantois having revolted againſt the emperor, on account of a tax which he inſiſted on contrary to their privileges, offered to be ſubjects to the king, and to render him maſter of the Low Countries. Francis generouſly refuſed it: he did more, he granted Charles V. a paſſage through France, on the promiſe of the inveſtiture of Milan, and received him with all the magnificence poſſible, without demanding this promiſe in writing. A miſplaced frankneſs multiplied his faults: he had the imprudence to act as a friend with a cunning enemy, whoſe character was very well known. He confided his ſecrets to the king of England, and furniſhed him with the means of perplexing him,

him, not only with the Engliſh, but with the Turks.

As ſoon as the emperor was arrived in Flanders, he was called upon to perform his promiſe with regard to Milan. He confidently replied, 'That he had promiſed nothing.' The anger of the king diſcharged itſelf on the conſtable of Montmorency, who loſt his favour for having adviſed him to truſt to the word of the emperor. A promiſe in writing would moſt likely have been as little binding; but it would have ſerved as a proof of the perfidy. The bon-mot of the fool of the court, named Tribolet, deſerves to be recorded. He had written on his tablets, that Charles V. was more a fool than he, in expoſing himſelf to paſs through the kingdom; 'but,' ſaid the king to him, 'if I give him leave to paſs through the kingdom without doing him any hurt, what wilt thou ſay then?' 'That is eaſily anſwered,' replied Tribolet; 'I would efface his name, and put in yours.' Several people had the ſame ſecret thoughts as this buffoon, though he alone had the privilege of ſpeaking them.

This new broil of the two princes ſeemed to denounce a new war. The king, already furious in ſeeing himſelf unworthily trifled with, received ſtill another affront.

Two

Two French ambaſſadors were aſſaſſinated on the road, by the order of the marquis of Guaſt, an officer belonging to the emperor. This was a reaſon more than ſufficent for breaking the truce. Every thing was very ſoon in an uproar. The duke of Orleans made conqueſts in Flanders, and abandoned them to fly to the other extremity of the kingdom, where he hoped to partake of the glory of the battle in concert with the dauphin Henry. He was cruelly deceived in this hope. The dauphin miſcarried at the ſiege of Perpignan; the count Enguien ſucceeded no better at that of Nice; the gallies of the king, joined to thoſe of Barbaroſſa, (for the intrigues of Charles V. had not been able to detach the Turks from the French party) returned to Toulon after a uſeleſs ſiege.

It was a ſtrange ſpectacle for Europe, to ſee Chriſtians and Muſſulmen united in one common army. It was for the emperor a fine occaſion of invective. The king juſtified himſelf by a manifeſto, and alleged the example of Abraham, David, and the Maccabees. All his reaſons were leſs ſtrong than the authority of Charles V. who at length went ſo far as to declare him an enemy of the empire, and of the Chriſtian name in general.

The battle of Carizoles, which the count Enguien had gained in Italy, produced no advantage;

advantage; because a part of the army was recalled, which was necessary for the defence of the kingdom. Henry VIII. irritated against the king more than any thing on account of the confidence which he had indiscreetly put in the emperor, made a league with the last, notwithstanding their mutual resentments. Policy made him forget Charles V. his divorced aunt, and the persecuted church of England. Henry besieged and took Boulogne: the emperor invaded Soissons. They negociated with him afresh. He fearing that this enterprise would be as fruitless as that of Florence, consented to the peace, and promised to the duke of Orleans, the king's second son, his daughter in marriage, with either Milan or the Low Countries. The death of this young prince discharged him from an obligation which he would perhaps have violated without scruple.

Henry VIII. made peace in 1546, by which Boulogne was to be rendered back to France in eight years, for eight hundred thousand golden crowns. Religious disputes already excited in France a dangerous ferment; the love of novelty, so strong among the French; a taste for letters, which excited a confidence of mind; the specious reasons with which some learned Protestants covered their false systems; the protection which had been

given

given them by Margaret queen of Navarre, and ſiſter to the king, a princeſs of diſtinguiſhed genius; and the very fires into which they threw the heretics, contributed to the rapid progreſs of hereſy. The horrid executions of Mirandol and Cabrieres ſerved only to ſtrengthen the ſpirit of the ſect, which was fond of hardening itſelf againſt rigour. Cabrieres, a little village of Comtat, and Mirandol, a great borough of a province, preſerved the errors of the ancient Vaudois; but little different from thoſe of the proteſtants. Luther had ſent thither his miniſters, and theſe Vaudois did not diſſemble their opinions. The parliaments of Provence made too ſevere a decree againſt them, the execution of which was ſuſpended for ſome years; but the firſt preſident of Oppede having repreſented them to the court in the light of rebels, the cardinal of Tournon engaged Francis to order that the decree ſhould be executed. They foreſaw not the atrocious exceſs to which Oppede and advocate-general Guerin would carry it. They fell upon theſe unhappy people: a ſcore of heretics only were condemned to death; but three thouſand people, without diſtinction either of ſex or age, were inhumanly maſſacred. Mirandol, Cabrieres, and twenty-five boroughs;

roughs or villages, were reduced to ashes. What a means of honouring religion! The king heard it with horror; but this barbarity was not punished till the following reign, by the death of Guerin: Oppede having more credit at court, did not appear criminal.

It was now that Calvinism began to tear religion to pieces, and introduced the first seeds of a civil war. Calvin, a native of Noyon, had already made many proselytes. When he left his native country in 1538, he became the chief of the religion of Geneva: he regulated the tenets and the learning of this religion. His doctrine differing in some points from that of Luther, was still more incompatible with the rights of the church than his; especially with regard to the real presence, and the forms of exterior worship. The reformists of France, of Switzerland, of Holland, and England, chose it preferable to Lutheranism. The frequent variation of the Protestants is a proof how little solidity there is in their principles.

Henry VIII. did not long enjoy the peace which he had concluded with Francis; he died tranquilly after having reigned tyrannically: of six wives whom he had married, two were divorced; two others (of whom Anne Bolleyn was one) were beheaded.

headed. The zeal which he had at first shewn against Luther, became furious against the Heretics, and against the Catholics: he equally employed tortures to support his own schism and to stifle new opinions: a prince who piqued himself so much on being a Catholic, that he would never have separated from Rome, if the pope had had the prudence to consult the interest of the church rather than the resentment of Charles V. The king of France survived him only a few months. His libertinism had procured him that shameful disease which was brought from America by the Spaniards: he died at the age of fifty-two. According to Henault, he would have been the first prince of his time, if he had been happy enough to have added wisdom to his courage. His temerity, his negligence, his taste for expences and pleasures, contributed not a little to the misfortunes which the cunning and finesse of his rival had brought upon him. In the last years of his life, taught by experience, no longer a slave to love, he seriously applied himself to business. His great qualities, whether of heart or mind, appeared truly solid when his passions were dissipated; but they had led him into faults which could never be repaired.

 The

The art of war was no longer the ſame as under the feudal government. They were convinced of the neceſſity of infantry. From the time of Lewis XI. the army had been almoſt entirely compoſed of Swiſs and Germans; the laſt, known under the name of Lanſquenets or Black Bands. Francis I. eſtabliſhed a new infantry, divided into ſeven legions, of ſix thouſand men each, according to the model of the ancient Roman legions. This militia did not ſubſiſt; they returned to the ſyſtem of the bands, which conſiſted only of five or ſix hundred men.

The union of Britanny with the crown in 1532, was a great political work; the Britons themſelves demanded this union as neceſſary to the tranquillity of the kingdom. It was with great difficulty they were brought to renounce the deſire they had of having a prince among themſelves; but in rendering their oaths to the court, they guarded themſelves againſt thoſe wars which would have followed, had they inſiſted on a ſubject of that province. Nothing could do more honour to Francis I. than the title of Reſtorer of Letters. If they flouriſhed with more eclât in Italy through the care of Leo X. and the Medicis, they were, however, ſufficiently cultivated

tivated

tivated in France to foretel the prodigies which they would one day bring to light. Among the men of quality, the cardinal of Belrai, William and Martin of Langei, his brothers, became as reſpectable for their ſcience as for their places. Bude of Chaſtel, Laſcaris, who was one of the ſcholars, eſcaped from the ruins of Conſtantinople, opened the ſources of true literature; but Eraſmus in Holland, through the brightneſs of his genius, and the prodigious extent of his knowledge, gave, in ſome degree, laws to the men of letters. It is very well known how wittily he ridiculed doctors who were ſtill attached to their old pedantry. Francis enriched the royal library with the moſt valuable books; founded the royal college and printing-houſe; he ſuppreſſed the cuſtom of writing the public acts in Latin; the Romans were warned not to write their acts in Greek.

The fine arts generally follow letters; architecture diſplayed its magnificence: Fountainbleau, and ſeveral other edifices, are monuments of this prince. He began the palace of the Louvre. Women appearing at court inſenſibly ſoftened the natural rudeneſs of manners, which belongs to a warlike nation. Meanwhile, luxury had ſtill its boundaries, the greateſt lords carrying their wives behind them into the country;

country; all which they ſtiled moſt magnificent. The ceremonies which ſhone with the greateſt eclat, were little in comparifon of the objects which every day ſtrike our eyes.

HENRY II.

HENRY II. ſon of Francis I. mounted the throne at twenty-nine years old: he had all the qualies of a warrior rather than thoſe of a king; much courage and addreſs, too much deſire of leaving government to itſelf, and a blind paſſion for Diana of Poitiers, his miſtreſs, whom he made ducheſs of Valentenois; an intriguing ſpirited woman, artful enough to ſubdue to her dominion (notwithſtanding her age being forty-ſeven) a young king, under whoſe name ſhe reigned as ſovereign. The conſtable of Montmorency was recalled to court, and ſeveral of the principal officers belonging to the late king were diſgraced. They endeavoured in England, to marry Edward VI. with Mary Stuart queen of Scots. The union of theſe two kingdoms would have been fatal to the French, which had always profited by their diviſions.

divisions. Henry II. foresaw the danger, and married this princess to the dauphin. The English had been forced to yield up Boulogne. A violent sedition in Guienne, on account of the rigours of the excise on salt, was easily calmed. A war in Italy, on account of the dukedoms of Parma and Placentia, given by Paul III. to Lewis Farnese, his bastard, produced nothing considerable.

All the efforts of France were turned against Charles V. His despotism made Germany revolt. He kept the duke of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse prisoners. The famous regulation during the interim of 1548, by which he pretended to refer religious disputes to the general council, being in some points favourable to the Lutherans, permitting communion of two kinds, and allowing the marriage of priests, excited the indignation of the Catholics. In these circumstances, Henry II. leagued himself with some principal Germans to defend the Germanic liberty. He went into Lorraine, rapidly overrunning Metz, Toule, and Verdun; but his allies made peace with the emperor, who granted them liberty of conscience. This contrary stroke stopt the progress of his arms. He, notwithstanding, entered the kingdom with a full resolution of preserving

ſerving his conqueſts. The people having in ſome kind bought it, by a tax of twenty-five livres upon every belfrey, and by another raiſed on the income of church taxes, the greateſt part of which, it is ſaid, the dutcheſs of Valentinois had applied to her own uſe.

Charles V. being quite eaſy on the part of Germany, beſieged Metz with the moſt formidable army that he had ever yet made a campaign with. This great city was but badly fortified. Francis of Lorraine, duke of Guiſe, took on himſelf the care of defending it. A noble emulation drew together to that place, almoſt all the firſt nobility of the kingdom. The prudence, activity, and courage of the duke triumphed over the forces of the emperor, who abandoned his enterpriſe, after ſixty-five days ſiege. He revenged himſelf on Terouane, a ſtrong city of the Low countries. One of his generals took it and razed it to the ground; ſo that its name does not now remain. Heſdin ſubmitted to the ſame fate. It was on ſuch ruins, and by ſhedding ſtreams of blood, that theſe ambitious princes eſtabliſhed their grandeur; their hiſtory furniſhes ſubjects of tears for every eye. The following year they ravaged Brabant, Hainault, and Cambreſes, gaining a victory over the emperor, and

yet

yet drawing but little advantage from it. They fought in Italy with the ſame ſucceſs as in Flanders. The French loſt the battle of Marcian; but they made themſelves admired at Sienne, where the brave Monthie, whoſe memoirs is ſtill retained among us, ſupported a ſiege for ſix months. In ſhort, the ſyſtem of Europe changed all at once, by means of one of thoſe events which are beyond human foreſight. Charles V. after having put the nations of Europe in ſuch commotion, reſolved to live a life of ſolitude; whether it was through diſguſt, chagrin, or a ſenſe of piety, he abandoned the government to Philip II. his ſon, who had eſpouſed Mary queen of England. The empire would have given the finiſhing ſtroke to the grandeur of Philip; but Ferdinand, brother of the emperor, already choſen king of the Romans, would not be perſuaded, whatever inſtances were made to him on that head, to renounce that title in favour of his nephew; ſo that the houſe of Auſtria was divided into two branches. There is no doubt, if we may believe report, but Charles V. when he came to himſelf in the monaſtery, where he paſt two years, finding himſelf without authority, or having any thing to do with worldly matters, repented him that he had ſo readily

dily reduced himſelf to that condition. The pleaſures of ſolitude are by no means formed for ambitious minds. We may judge of the activity of this prince by the continual journies that he made; nine into Germany, ſix into Spain, ſeven to Italy, four to France, ten to the Low Countries, two to England, and two to Africa. Philip, from the depth of his cloſet, ſhook Europe with commotions. The immenſe treaſures which he had drawn from Mexico and Peru, diſcovered in the reign of his father, put him in a condition of attempting any enterpriſe he pleaſed. America ſwiming in the blood of its own natives, was now, if I may ſo ſay, upon the eve of revenging itſelf on the cruel avarice of the Europeans, in furniſhing them with the means of deſtroying one another. Without making any reflections upon the conqueſt of the new world, I would obſerve only, that the Spaniards, under pretext of planting there the faith, cauſed the very name of Chriſtian to be abhorred, by the barbarities they committed. We may eaſily conceive every exceſs their paſſions could occaſion; but that the goſpel ſhould ſerve as a cloke for inhumanity, is a thing that can be ſcarcely credited.

After

After the example of the popes of the house of Medicis, who had eſtabliſhed their relations, the dukes of Tuſcany and of Paul III. who had given Parma and Placentia to his ſon Farnaſe, Paul IV. Caraffee, being willing to put a principal in his houſe, propoſed to the king the conqueſt of Naples, and to ſhare it with him. In vain the conſtable of Montmorency repreſented the danger of the enterpriſe. The cardinal of Lorraine and the duke of Guiſe, his brother, each of them for their own ambitious views, inſpired the monarch with falſe hopes, with which they dazzled his eyes. In conquering another kingdom, he was like to have loſt his own. The duke of Guiſe, who had the command of the army, did not find thoſe aſſiſtances in Italy which the pope had promiſed him, and but poorly ſupported his brilliant reputation, while he made this country wretched in a war, which was the rock that the French nation ſplit upon. Emanuel Philabert, duke of Savoy, one of the firſt generals of his time, beſieged St. Quintin for the king of Spain. The old conſtable commanded an army in Picardy. He was willing to aſſiſt the place, which was courageouſly defended by admiral Coligny his nephew. Great men are ſometimes guilty of moſt egregious faults, when

when too much presumption renders them deaf against prudent counsel. He was obstinately bent against the advice of the marshal of St. Andrew, to make all his troops march at the risk of being attacked with much disadvantage. The duke of Savoy found his account in it, and put the French to rout. This battle of St. Quintin may be compared to those which had formerly given the English half of the kingdom. The duke of Enguien and a number of lords were killed on the spot; a much greater number, among whom was the constable, were taken prisoners. Some days after, Philip II. shewed himself at the camp: the duke of Savoy would have kissed his hand; but he drew it away: 'It is I,' said he, 'that should kiss yours, who have procured me so glorious a victory.' This monarch, not being a warrior, could not do better than place his confidence in great commanders.

Terror now spread itself throughout France. If the king of Spain had marched straight to Paris, he might undoubtedly have taken it; but, whether such bold undertakings did not suit with his character, or whether prudence made him fear the resources of a warlike and powerful nation, whichever it was, he contented himself with taking St. Quintin, Catelet, Ham,

Ham, and Noyon. The canons of St. Quintin retired from the place, though they left their benefices behind them: 'We 'will not,' ſaid they, 'remain in a city 'where it is not permitted us to pray pub-'lickly to God for the proſperity of 'France.' Meanwhile, the nobility gathered together on all ſides for the defence of the kingdom: the principal cities were eager in furniſhing money. The king was then convinced, according to the remark of Mezerai, of the truth of his father's dying words; That the French were the beſt people in the world, and that it was the worſt policy to torment them with extraordinary taxes and ſeverity, ſince they ſo liberally contributed where the neceſſity of the ſtate required it.

It was truly politic, as Francis I. had recommended, not too much to lift up the princes of the houſe of Lorraine, ſo conſiderable through their birth and their merit; but they thought only on the preſent moment, without preparing for futurity. The duke of Guiſe was immediately recalled from Italy, and Henry confided to him all his authority, under the title of lieutenant-general of the kingdom. He could not place it in better hands. The duke had no ſooner got his troops together than he formed a deciſive enterpriſe, the

the apparent impossibility of which facilitated the success. Mary queen of England, wife of the king of Spain, having declared war against France, he resolved to besiege Calais, and to render back to the crown a place which they had regretted for more than two hundred years. The garrison were but few in number during winter. This was the time which they took to attack it. After having deceived the enemy by feigned marches, all on a sudden he appeared before this city, which was looked on as impregnable. In eight days, in the month of January, he took Calais, which had cost eleven months siege to Edward III. Guines was also carried by assault. The taking of Thionville put the finishing stroke to the glory of the general. He was celebrated by every one as the saviour of his country. His amiable virtues gained him all hearts, while his arms made his enemies tremble.

The defeat of the marshal of Termes, beaten by the count of Egmont, gave a new relief to the prince of Lorraine. The more reputation and credit he acquired, the more the envious laboured to ruin him at court. The dutchess of Valentinois, constant mistress of the heart and soul of Henry, dissatisfied with the cardinal of Lorraine, took the part of Montmorency, the

the rival of Guiſe. The conſtable was employed to negociate peace with the king of Spain, even while he was yet a priſoner. This monarch, having loſt his wife, and Elizabeth, the daughter of Henry VIII. and Anne Bolleyn now beginning to reign in England, and refuſing to marry him, they each of them ſeparately treated with France at Catau Cambreſis. Elizabeth could not yield Calais without offending the whole nation; but conſented that the king ſhould keep it eight years, at the end of which time he ſhould engage to give it back again, or pay five hundred thouſand crowns, if the reſtitution was not made at the fixed time. They foreſaw, without doubt, that Calais would remain with France; at leaſt that they would never be able to regain it but by force. But this wiſe princeſs found peace neceſſary, in order to ſeat herſelf firmly on the throne. Philip II. made a treaty infinitely more glorious: the duke of Savoy was re-eſtabliſhed in his ſtate; France rendered back a great number of places; Metz, Toule, and Verdun remained, in ſpite of the emperor Ferdinand, whoſe intereſt the king of Spain ſeemed to be little concerned about. This laſt prince, by the treaty of Catau Cambreſis, was to marry a daughter of Henry II.; but

but the marriage feaſts were very ſoon changed into mourning.

The cuſtom of tournaments, ſo common in the times of chivalry, ſtill ſubſiſted, though forbidden by different popes. The king excelled in theſe dangerous exerciſes: after having broken ſeveral lances with ſucceſs, he inſiſted upon juſting afreſh with the earl of Montgomery, and was wounded in the eye by a ſtroke of the lance, of which he died. Tournaments having often produced ſuch misfortunes, an envoy from the ſultan, who aſſiſted under Charles VII. at this military ſpectacle, ſaid, like a wiſe man, 'If this is all in 'earneſt, it is not enough; if it is jeſt, it 'is too much; but a noble warrior loves 'to brave danger even in amuſement.' Duels were again ſo authoriſed, that Henry, at the beginning of his reign, was ſpectator of a duel where Chateigneraie, his favourite, loſt his life. Struck with this accident, he forbid an abuſe ſo contrary to humanity. Happy had it been for him if his wiſdom had ſet the ſame bounds to tournaments.

The proteſtants were now burnt without mercy. Some members of Parliament were arreſted for having adviſed to moderate the rigour of the ordinances. That ſpirit of ſoftneſs, which Father Daniel calls

compassion out of season, would perhaps have produced better effects than such torments; many of the religionists, being drawn more from their hatred against the church than any other motive, attached themselves to error. They were compared to the first Christians persecuted under the Pagan emperors. They had enough to confound them, by having the example of their apostle Calvin opposed to them, who, in 1552, had burnt at Geneva the famous Michael Lewet, accused of not believing in the Trinity. It may likewise be conjectured, that they would themselves have become persecutors, if they had not wanted power; but it is no less true, that their number and obstinacy increased every day in the midst of these terrible executions. The court, the city, the country, all orders of people were infected with these flying errors. D. Andelot, brother of admiral de Coligny, interrogated by the king on his sentiments, had the hardiness to blaspheme against the mass. A violent fermentation denounced the storms which very soon broke out; the English for ever renounced the Catholic religion; queen Mary, for the re-establishment of it, had employed every species of torture; Elizabeth declared herself a Protestant, and had no difficulty in fixing the faith by parlia-

 ment

ment and the chief consent of the nation. She was acknowledged for head of the English church; a whimsical title, which she constantly maintained as one of the prerogatives of the crown.

FRANCIS II.

THE short course of this reign, which was only seventeen months, hatched the seeds of a religious war, the most terrible scourge that the kingdom could have proved. The ambition of the great armed the fanatacism of the people; it resulted from infinite evils, the memory of which ought to inspire a lively horror for that spirit of cabal, which false zeal sometimes changes into frenzy. A king of thirteen years old, weak, and incapable of governing, mounted the throne, at a time when three powerful factions divided the court. Those of the princes of the blood were, Anthony of Bourbon, king of Navarre, and his brother the prince of Conde; each of them having been for a long time offended at not being taken into business: that of Guise, to whom the quality of uncles to the king, the queen Mary Stuart being

being their niece, had given more credit than they had under the late reign: and lastly, that of the Montmorencys, the chief of whom, by his long services and by his dignity of constable, believed he had a right to pretend every thing.

The queen-mother, Catherine of Medicis, a princess of a supple artful genius, of an Italian policy, mistress of that understanding which had animated the soul of the dutchess of Valentinois her rival, immediately taking into consideration the pretensions of these different parties, very soon declared for the Guises, whom she hated, but whom she believed she had occasion for. Francis put at the head of the government the duke of Guise and the cardinal of Lorrain; the constable of Montmorency was disgraced, and the king of Navarre banished the court. If, on one side, it was impossible to conciliate so many different interests; on the other, by offending illustrious men, they drew on themselves powerful enemies. The prince of Conde, as lively and enterprising as his brother, was irresolute and phlegmatic, lost no time in plotting with Coligny and Andelot, nephews of the constable, declared partizans of Calvinism. It is to Coligny that the project of raising an insurrection among the Protestants is attributed.

 Every

Every thing ſeemed to lead towards a revolt; executions were not diſcontinued; an inquiſition in France exerciſed the authority of a bloody tribunal, ſuch as the nation deteſted. Ann of Bourg, a counſellor, clerk to the parliament of Paris, a magiſtrate diſtinguiſhed by his birth, his manners and his integrity, was firſt hanged, and afterwards burnt at the greve for hereſy. His death made him be looked on as a martyr. Enthuſiaſm and deſpair violently inflamed the minds of men. Experience very ſhortly ſhewed, that the Guiſes, in affecting a too rigid zeal for religion, had done no good either to their own intereſt or that of the cauſe they were engaged in. The famous confederacy of de Amboiſe was the firſt fruit of the hatred with which they had inſpired the people. A gentleman of Perigouardin, named Renaudie, was the chief of a party, in which the prince of Conde (without appearing) was the ſoul. Several bodies of Proteſtants, conducted by brave captains, were to come from different provinces to Amboiſe, where they held their court; they were to ſeize on the king and the Guiſes, to force from them an edict for liberty of conſcience, and to put into the hands of the prince of Conde all miniſterial authority. The ſecret of the conſpiracy was happily betrayed by a Calviniſt advocate, to whom

Renaudie had the imprudence of confiding it; upon which the duke of Guiſe was made lieutenant-general of the kingdom. He took admirable meaſures for unravelling this plot, and for preventing the execution of it. On a certain day, the rebels arrived by different roads: they were met; they were defeated: ſeveral with Renaudie periſhed with ſword in hand. Thoſe whom they ſeized, except a ſmall number, were put to the greateſt tortures. Amboiſe became a kind of ſlaughter-houſe. The prince of Conde, who was come to court to wait the effect of the conſpiracy, was arreſted on vague ſuſpicions, without the power of conviction. He juſtified himſelf in full council with much eloquence, and finiſhed by declaring, that in ſpite of his title of prince of the blood, he defied to combat any one who dared to accuſe him of a crime ſo atrocious. The duke of Guiſe, to whom this challenge was meant, perfectly poſſeſſed himſelf; he ſupported the innocence of the prince, and offered him his ſword, if a duel was admitted as a proof. They reſtored him to liberty, and wrote to the king of Navarre and admiral Coligny, letters full of confidence, though they ſuſpected them more than the prince. They began at the ſame time to moderate the edicts againſt the Calviniſts. It

was ordained, that those alone should be punishable who were convicted of violence and sedition: nothing could be more just, and policy here agreed with the spirit of Christianity.

The celebrated Michael of the hospital, whose merit had raised him to the dignity of chancellor, had principles very different from those of the cardinal of Lorrain, and almost all the clergy: the cardinal was desirous of extirpating innovations, and establishing the tyranny of the inquisition. This would have been kindling a fire throughout France: to avoid so great a misfortune, the chancellor consented to interdict to the parliament, by the edict of the Romerantin, the knowledge of the crime of heresy,* and to attribute it to the bishops; an edict which, according to the views of the cardinal, would render the searches after the heretics more exact and rigorous. This rigour, at the same time, inspired them with the sentiments of rebellion. In Dauphiny, in Provence, in Normandy, seditions were excited. 'It is 'thus,' says Daniel, 'that a fire concealed 'under the cinders produces all at once 'a flame throughout the kingdom; and 'that the Catholics, who had often blamed 'the rigorous edicts of Francis I. and Henry 'II. had learned from fatal experience, that

'they

'they could not take too much precaution against novelties in matters of religion; and that, independent of the zeal which every Catholic ought to have for the true faith, the love of their country was sufficient to make them neglect nothing which could contribute to stifle their errors in their birth.' It is, without doubt, essential to stifle public plagues in their infancy; but the historian might observe, that tortures have always produced a contrary effect; that far from extinguishing a fire, it makes it burn with greater lustre; that the more you would restrain the disturbers of the state, the more compassion you ought to have for the unhappy people, whose only crime is, being mistaken. Is then zeal for religion contrary to humanity? Is it by flames that you must convince the understanding? Must you burn millions of citizens only because they cannot be brought to think just as the church does? and, Is it allowable for human justice, pitilessly to punish men for their secret opinions? Far from it: it seemed rather good policy as well as true zeal to oppose barriers to the progress of Calvinism, without furnishing to the Calvinists pretences for a rebellion.

Elizabeth, by her conduct, equally firm and prudent, took much better methods

to support her authority and new religion. Mary Stuart having pretensions to the throne of England, they sent troops into Scotland, under pretence of defending the Catholics, but really to form enterprises against Elizabeth. That princess obliged the court to make a treaty, by which Mary promised not to bear on her escutcheons the arms of England, and the king to recal his troops from Scotland. The great men assembled at Fountainbleau, according to ancient custom, in order to find out remedies against the intestine divisions. It was there that Coligny presented a request, in the name of the Protestants, to obtain liberty of conscience, and the public exercise of their religion. The bishop of Valencia, John Montluc, counsellor for the state, was not afraid to speak in their favour. He attributed the public evils in a great measure to the ignorance and disorders of the clergy: he spared neither the pope nor the bishops, 'forty of whom,' said he, 'have been 'seen at the same time in Paris, where 'they have been softened with pleasure, 'and forgot the duties of their function.' He represented, that the rebels among the Calvinists ought to be severely punished; but that those who were faithful, and who proved it by their submission and patience, deserved

deserved to be tolerated. He concluded, that they ought to be left freely to their own belief, and only to be called to account when they held dangerous assemblies. The archbishop of Vienne was of the same opinion, and supported it by very strong reasons. The admiral harrangued with more vehemence: he feared not the Guises, whom he particularly reproached with destroying the confidence between the sovereign and his people, by the numerous guard which surrounded his person. From the time of the conspiracy at Amboise, they had greatly increased the king's attendants; which, nevertheless, was nothing in comparison of what it is now. The duke of Guise, and the cardinal his brother, spoke according to their principles in matters of government. The result of this assembly was, the convocation of the states-general. The Guises were in hopes of drawing there the king of Navarre and the prince of Conde, whom the fear of some violence had hindered from coming to the assembly. The latter had openly declared himself a Calvinist: he was author of a new conspiracy, discovered like that of Amboise. The king of Navarre, though always fluctuating, appeared no less suspicious, nor less powerful. Francis sent for them to meet the states at

 Orleans,

Orleans, promiſing them certain ſecurity from violence; but as ſoon as they arrived, the prince of Conde was put in priſon, and his brother kept from his ſight. They named commiſſaries to carry on the proſecution againſt the prince: he refuſed to anſwer them. He demanded being judged, according to the privileges of his birth, by the court of Peers; they, notwithſtanding, condemned him to death. The chancellor of the hoſpital, and the count of Sancerre, generouſly refuſed to ſign the warrant; he would, nevertheleſs, have been executed, (the Guiſes becoming more audacious from the time that they had been his enemies, thinking themſelves ſure of a complete triumph) if the ſudden death of the king (at the age of ſeventeen) had not prevented it. He is called by ſome, the Guiltleſs King, on the account of the innocence of his manners: 'A title more 'glorious than any other,' ſays Mezerai judiciouſly, 'when it is founded on wiſ-'dom and virtue, and not on weakneſs of 'mind.'

CHARLES IX.

THE death of the late king increaſed the heat of faction. Charles, his brother and ſucceſſor, being only ten years old, Catherine of Medicis took on herſelf the government. Her well-directed policy managed all parties ſo as to make uſe of one againſt the other. She took care not to abandon the prince of Conde to the ambitious vengeance of the Guiſes: ſhe reconciled herſelf with him, and with the king of Navarre, by releaſing the firſt out of priſon, and in procuring for the other the general lieutenantcy of the kingdom. Theſe princes and the Guiſes ſeemed to depoſite in her hands their mutual diſagreements. More enemies than ever in their hearts, they acted together with all the outward appearance of benevolence. The conſtable of Montmorency was recalled. On his arrival at Orleans, he aſked what was the meaning of ſo many guards, and if the king was not in ſafety in the midſt of his ſubjects. Without any further explanation he ordered the guards to withdraw, and was obeyed: an inſtance of what power a conſtable has.

The ſtates held in this city produced no real good; though the chancellor of the hoſpital, who, in opening them, had blamed the violent zeal of the religioniſts and Catholics, had diſapproved of the injurious names of Papiſts and Hugonots *, and exhorted all the world to reunite for the common good; yet they made but feeble efforts for the intereſt of the kingdom. The deputies of the nobility and the third ſtate, declaimed againſt the clergy: thoſe of the clergy inveighed againſt the Calviniſts, and demanded likewiſe, that whoever preſented, or ſhould preſent requeſts for obtaining the free exerciſe of that religion, ſhould be puniſhed as a heretic. This ſtroke was caſt directly at the admiral de Coligny, who did himſelf juſtice for the injury.

It was eſſential to re-eſtabliſh the finances. The debts amounted to forty-two millions, though Henry II. had found ſeventeen hundred thouſand crowns in the treaſury. It was propoſed, that thoſe who had taken care of the revenues of the king, ſhould render him an account of them, in particular the cardinal of Lorrain; but this demand dropped

* It is likely, that the name of Hugonots, which was given in France to the reformed, was from a German word, which ſignifies allied by oath.

dropped without any effect. All the fruit of the states of Orleans was reduced to a celebrated ordinance, by which the administration of justice was entirely reserved to the people of the robe, and the pragmatic sanction re-established according to election: an article which the court of Rome could not suffer to subsist for any length of time.

Whatever knowledge of mankind Catherine de Medicis was possessed of, it was yet impossible to manage people's hearts in such a manner as not very soon to produce fatal changes, where so many different passions and interests jarred with each other. The king of Navarre, already discontented, determined to quit the court. The constable followed him: their retreat increased the power of the Guises. The king, who neither did or said any thing but as his mother directed, ordered the constable to return. This old warrior yielded, notwithstanding the solicitations of his nephews: he hated novelty in matters of religion as much as Coligny favoured it: it was that which, perhaps, determined him to unite at last with the duke of Guise, contrary to his family compact, and even to the wish of his own heart. This change retained the king of Navarre; he did not cease to solicit the queen-mother in favour of the Protestants, whom

whom he protected either through policy, through generosity, or through prejudice, without being openly of their party. Catherine had great desire of satisfying him, though she had always declared for the Catholics; she proposed the dangerous expedient of a public conference between the defenders of each religion. Nothing could appear more contrary to the interest of the Romish church, than the bringing the doctrine of it into dispute, nor more conformable to the desires of its adversaries, who found themselves by this means on some degree of level with their judges; but the vanity of the cardinal of Lorrain made this project be adopted: he flattered himself, that he should shine in the dispute, and confound the most famous ministers of the reformation. These conferences, so known under the name of the Treaty of Poissi, served only, as might have been foreseen, to render each party more firm in their sentiments. The cardinal of Lorrain on one side, and on the other Theodore Beze, a disciple of Calvin, as amiable as his master was severe, signalized their eloquence and their knowledge in this place. Pius IV. could not prevent an assembly, of which he apprehended the consequence. He had sent thither a legate, accompanied by father Laines, second general

neral of the Jesuits. It was in this assembly that he harangued with a confidence which offended the queen. He said, addressing his speech to her, ‘ That neither ‘ she, or any other prince, ought to treat on ‘ affairs of religion, since such conferences ‘ were capable of altering the faith of the ‘ laity; and that they ought to abide by ‘ the judgment of the church, who had ‘ the sole right of determining.’ If Catherine de Medicis had given way to her resentment, it would, perhaps, have driven the Jesuits out of the kingdom; but the credit of Laines, the desires of the cardinals de Lorrain and de Tournou, made an act pass for their establishment, forming a college which went by the name of the Society of Jesus, and which should submit to the bishop of the diocese. Such was the weak beginning of a Society which very shortly extended itself all over the kingdom, until it became a body as powerful as celebrated. Rome could not oppose its enemies with more zealous defenders. According to Father Daniel, the treaty of Poissi on each side attributed the victory to themselves, weakening the preventions of the king of Navarre for the Calvinists. The legate acted more efficaciously on his part, in making him hope for the restitution of Navarre. Where things are equal, interest

interest very soon fixes an undetermined character. This prince embraced with eagerness the side of the Catholics, from which he had been, till now, very distant. He united himself with the duke of Guise and the constable, who, with the marshal of Albon of St. Andrew, formed what was called the Triumvirate.

The queen-mother, who held it as her favourite maxim, that the art of reigning was that of dividing, could only balance so considerable a faction, by fortifying the contrary one. It was this motive which gave occasion for an edict for allowing liberty of conscience to the Protestants, on condition that they would hold their assemblies in the suburbs, and not in the city. An infinite number of people who had before feared to declare themselves, now threw off the mask. They began to preach; they deserted the convents; they insulted the Catholics, as they had insulted the Hugonots. Mankind always carry things to excess, and soon become furious in religious quarrels. The more they were reasoned with, the more they were inflamed, and there was but little wanting to cause a general insurrection. The massacre of Vassi was the signal of civil war. The duke of Guise passing through Vassi in his way to the country, some of his people disturbed

disturbed a person who was preaching in a barn; from abuse they came at last to blows. The prince endeavoured to appease the tumult, and was wounded by a stone: his people, transported with fury, fell at once on the Hugonots, of whom they killed more than sixty. It is pretended on this occasion, that, as judge of the place, he recalled the edict of liberty of conscience, imprudently saying, putting his hand on his sword, 'See here the 'fruits of this detestable edict.' It was a word escaped in choler; and the massacre of Vassi was an accident which happened contrary to the intention of the duke of Guise. But the Protestants waited only an occasion for revolt. While the Catholics were loud in their praises of the prince of Lorrain, and the preachers compared him to Moses and Jehu, who, in shedding the blood of the impious, had consecrated their hands, and revenged the quarrel of the Lord, they meanwhile represented him as an execrable murderer, as the tyrant of the nation, and enemy of the laws. Both sides breathed nothing but war.

The king of Navarre and the Triumvirate, in order to assure themselves of the person of the king, forced him to quit Fountainbleau, and to follow them to

Paris.

Paris. The queen-mother, solicited the prince of Conde to draw him out of their hands. This specious motive coloured rebellion. The religionists ran from all parts forming an army for the prince, and establishing their chief. Several considerable cities entered into a league; Conde ravaged Orleans, which he made his place of arms. Too feeble against the royalists, he treated with the queen of England, and delivered Havre to her, in order to purchase her succour. Rouen was taken and sacked by the Catholics; the king of Navarre was there killed by a shot from a hand-gun. 'This prince,' says a celebrated author, 'merits a place in history, 'only because he was the father of the 'great Henry IV.' As if it was not sufficient for France to tear itself to pieces, it was delivered as a prey to strangers. On each side troops of Germans entered it. The two armies at length met at Dreux, with an eagerness which characterises civil war. That which was the most singular in this day's work was the taking of the two generals, the prince of Conde and the constable of Montmorency. The marshal of St. Andrew perished there, after having much contributed to the victory of the royalists. It increased the reputation of the duke of Guise, who received still more

honour

honour from the manner in which he treated the prince his prisoner. They both slept in the same bed. Cônde assures us, that he never closed his eyes, and that the duke slept as tranquilly as if they had been the most intimate friends. Rarely is such greatness of soul joined with animosity and hatred; but there was nothing more wanting to the duke of Guise, in order to make him a model for heroes, than the being able to bound his ambition to the glory of signalizing his virtue. The siege of Orleans, which he undertook after the battle of Dreux, seemed to foretel the ruin of the rebels. One of the out-places had been already taken by assault, when this great man was assassinated by Poltrot, a young Protestant gentleman; the first example of frightful fanaticism which consecrates murder as an act of religion. Some historians relate, that another fanatical gentleman had made the same attempt at the siege of Rouen: but the duke avoided his design, demanding of him if he had not done him some evil; 'No,' replied he; 'but I would revenge my religion, of 'which you are the mortal enemy:' 'Very 'well,' replied the duke, 'if your reli'gion teaches you to kill me, who have 'never offended you, from mine I learn 'to pardon; I forgive you: judge from

'this

'this which of the two religions is best.' It must be confessed, that this great reply was not conclusive, since as much might be said to assassins who were zealous for a good cause. Both sides made professions of the gospel, and equally delivered themselves to the fury of fanaticism. The infamy of the reformed is the having given birth to this monstrous destroyer: as for the rest, there was no less policy than zeal in the steps of the Guises; since the duke and the cardinal, treating with the Protestant princes in Germany in 1562, flattered them with receiving into France the confession of Ausbourg: but whatever was the secret motive of their conduct, the Catholic religion, without them, had most likely been swallowed up in the kingdom.

The cowardly Poltrot being arrested after his crime, accused admiral Coligny, Beze, and some others, with having solicited him to it. Nothing was less likely than this accusation, if we may judge from the character of those who were the objects of it. The admiral cried out against the imposture, and instantly demanded, that they would suspend the execution of the assassin, till he should confront him; but it was refused. As hatred strengthens the most unjust prejudices, Henry of Guise, the eldest son of the

the deceaſed, conceived from this moment the deſign of ruining Coligny.

A treaty of peace having at length terminated civil war, liberty of conſcience was confirmed afreſh. Catholics and Proteſtants appeared united in the fidelity which they owed their country; they took Havre by force, which queen Elizabeth had refuſed to return to the king. By thus forfeiting her word, ſhe furniſhed a plauſible reaſon for his not reſtoring Calais, as he had engaged by the treaty of Catau Cambreſis. Though England had nothing more at heart than the reſtitution of this place, yet it did not prevent Elizabeth from concluding a peace with France.

From the beginning of Proteſtantiſm, the Catholics groaned for a general council, in the hope that it would diſſipate hereſy. Meanwhile, the diviſions of the princes, and the policy of the popes, had put an obſtacle between them and their deſires; the popes fearing an aſſembly where they would not be maſters, and who would, by the example of thoſe of Bale and of Conſtance, exerciſe authority themſelves. Nevertheleſs, that fear which kept in France a national council, more dangerous, perhaps, to the court of Rome, determined Pius IV. to reaſſemble the council

council of Trent, began in 1545, and for a long time disused. It was ended in 1563, after having confirmed the dogmas, without convincing the innovators, who pretended to be admitted to council among their judges. They decried the work of the church as a production of school debates and cabals; but the Catholics at last were confirmed in their belief. The publication of the council was opposed in the kingdom; whether on account of the last edict of pacification, or whether because it gave decrees of discipline contrary to secular jurisdiction and Gallic liberty; whichever its was, it did not prevent their looking on the chief points of doctrine as articles of faith. This famous council was shook by violent contest on the subject of precedency, between the ambassadors of Charles IX. and Philip II. The pope decided in favour of the French king. Disputes on this and other political affairs made the business of religion for a long time be neglected; for men are always ready to give up their spiritual concerns when any temporal object employs their ambition and vanity.

Catherine of Medicis in vain flattered herself with keeping a just balance betwixt two parties resolved to destroy each other. She could neither conciliate nor satisfy them.

them. Her addreſs and diſſimulation excited their hatred; ſuſpicious of Calviniſm, and indifferent about religion, ſhe affected the greateſt exactneſs, in keeping to the ceremonies of the church. In taking a tour round the provinces with the king, ſhe ſaw at Baionne the queen of Spain, her daughter, and had frequent conferences with the duke of Albe, general of Philip II. This monarch ſhewed himſelf extremely zealous for the Catholics, though he had in reality no other deſign in it than his own intereſt: he continually animated the court of France againſt the ſectaries, that he might himſelf profit by the diſcords and misfortunes of the kingdom. It was thought that conferences tended towards their ruin. A new accident confirmed this opinion. The Low Countries, (where, as well as other places, hereſy had taken root) had rebelled againſt the king of Spain, who endeavoured to govern them in a deſpotic manner, depriving them of their privileges, and taking pains to ſubmit them to the inquiſition. He ſent the duke of Albe at the head of an army to extirpate the rebels. Under pretence of neceſſary precautions, in caſe this army ſhould attack France, Catherine raiſed troops, and made a reinforcement of ſix thouſand Swiſs. The Proteſtants did not doubt

doubt but this was done with a design of oppressing them. From that time they complained bitterly of the court: their liberties were restrained; the violence of the Catholics were no more punished. The cruelties which the duke of Albe exercised in Flanders, made them dread a like persecution.

These subjects of complaint and inquietude gave occasion to a second civil war. The prince of Conde, by the counsel of Coligny, undertook to carry the king to Meaux. In becoming masters of his person, they would have been so of his government. The court prevented their design almost at the moment of execution. They employed the Swiss in a useful manner to draw him from such great peril. They received the monarch into their battalion, and conducted him to Paris, without the rebels being able to break through them. Some time after this, the constable attacked the prince of Conde at St. Dennis, with an army three times stronger than his own. This combat, the success of which was doubtful, finished the career of the illustrious Montmorency: he there received a mortal stroke, and preserved his firmness to the last. It is pretended that he said to his confessor, "Do 'you think that I have lived forty-five years,

'years, and do not know how to die a 'quarter of an hour.' He had often in his mouth these words: "One faith, one 'law, one king.' His place was not filled up, because it gave too much power for a subject: the queen-mother chose rather to make the duke of Anjou, brother of Charles IX. lieutenant-general of the kingdom; a young prince of great hopes, whose reputation seemed to promise one day to grace the throne.

War was shortly concluded by a treaty not so honourable for the king, as advantageous for the Calvinists: but it was not long before it broke out with much greater violence. As grievances multiplied every day, notwithstanding reciprocal conventions, Catherine imagined that she ought cut the root of the evil by arresting the chiefs of the faction. Conde and Coligny, informed of her design, fled to Rochelle for refuge, the bulwark of the Protestants. This enterprise of the queen was looked on as a declaration of war. It occasioned the disgrace of the chancellor of the hospital: a magistrate who transcended all praise, according to the president Henault; but whose religion was suspected, because he was an enemy to excess. The Hugonots again took to arms, assisted by the English and the

the Germans: the court revoked the edicts for liberty of conſcience: ravages, hoſtilities, and maſſacres depopulated France, as if it had been overrun by barbarians. Two great French armies engaged at Iarnac, near Saintonge. The duke of Anjou carried the day: the prince of Conde was killed in cold blood by Monteſquieu, after having given up his arms; a prince of extraordinary courage and genius, worthy of being put on the liſt with the moſt famous of his deſcendants; unhappy in having had the ambition of being chief of a faction; and more eſpecially, in not having had time to make amends for his rebellion. Coligny, a man the moſt fertile in reſources of any in the world, ſaved the French army, and made himſelf feared after the defeat of the prince of Conde, whoſe loſs ſeemed to be the ruin of his party. Another prince of the blood ſucceeded him, born for a model to kings; it was the prince of Bearn, afterwards Henry IV. ſon of the queen of Navarre, Jane of Albret, as zealous a Proteſtant as her huſband had been a weak Catholic. She herſelf preſented her ſon to the vanquiſhed, reanimating their hopes and their courage; and they declared the young Henry chief of the league.

The

The admiral and the intrepid Andelot put every thing in motion; while the cardinal of Chatillon, their brother, (who was called the count of Beauvais, from the name of his biſhoprick) ſince the time that he had abandoned the Romiſh church, was uſing every means in England for the intereſt of Calviniſm. The Proteſtants of Germany alſo ſignalized their zeal. The duke of Deuxponts was the head of it, ſurrounded by twelve thouſand men, traverſing almoſt all France to join the army of the admiral. The famous William prince of Orange, had great part in this enterpriſe, whoſe ſucceſs was chiefly owing to the miſunderſtanding of the Catholic generals. Many meaſures and reſources were taken, and prevented. Coligny raiſed the ſiege of Poictiers, and was defeated at Montcontour by the duke of Anjou; but, always firm and courageous in misfortune, he ſupported his part in ſuch a manner, that after four battles loſt, he was ſtill in a condition of reſiſting the royal power. The prince of Bearn, who was only thirteen years old, looked on him as his father; his mind was formed by him, and appeared worthy of ſuch a maſter. Inſtead of purſuing the diſperſed rebels, the duke of Anjou imprudently ſtopt to make ſieges, and gained but little by the victory. Poi-

tou, Saintonge, Bearn, and Guienne, were drenched in blood.

The fury of these two parties increased every day, and the Protestants refused to lay down their arms but on advantageous conditions; which they obtained by the treaty of St. Germain in Laie. They were not only allowed the liberty of preaching, but were granted four cities of safety, among which was Rochelle: they were declared capable of undertaking offices; they were permitted to object, in their law-suits with the Catholics, to any certain number of judges, without assigning a reason. This unhoped-for peace was a triumph for them. In the views of Catherine de Medicis it was most likely only a fatal deception: she was willing to destroy by perfidy those whom she could conquer no other way. Charles IX. having imbibed her maxims, trained to dissimulation, inclinable to cruelty, perfectly seconded her design. The most atrocious wickedness was covered under the finest appearances. In order to draw the chiefs of the Hugonot party to court, the king offered his sister Margaret in marriage to the young prince of Bearn. The queen of Navarre, charmed with this mark of reconciliation, was desirous of concluding the treaty. Coming to France, she was loaded with honours and

and careſſes. After the firſt interview, Charles IX. aſked his mother, if he had not played his part well: 'Yes,' replied Catherine; 'but this is only a beginning, 'it muſt be well finiſhed.' He replied, calling God to witneſs it, 'That he would 'draw them all into her nets.' The moſt difficult was to catch the admiral; this wiſe man was not to be tempted by a ſeducing appearance. The Gueux (which was the name that was given to the religioniſts of the Low Countries) had again rebelled againſt Spain, and the prince of Orange, William of Naſſau, took advantage of the rigours of a deſpotic government, to raiſe his ſubjects, and to found the republic of the United Provinces. In theſe circumſtances, the king appeared diſpoſed to make war with Philip II. The violent zeal of this monarch, and his ſtrait alliance with the Guiſes, made him infinitely odious to the reformed. Propoſing to Coligny a war of this kind, and offering him the command, he was weak enough to take it, notwithſtanding his juſt cauſe for hatred. He appeared before Charles IX. who received him with great teſtimonies of friendſhip, whoſe head he had but a little while before put up at an opprobrious price.

 Mean-

Meanwhile a ſudden death carried off the queen of Navarre. A report of her being poiſoned was every where ſpread without any proof to ſupport it. The admiral was exhorted on all ſides to accuſe the count. A Calviniſt captain one day taking his leave of him, was aſked by him why he retired into the country; 'Becauſe,' ſays he, 'we are here overpowered with 'careſſes: I had rather ſave myſelf among 'fools, than periſh with thoſe who believe 'themſelves too wiſe.' The admiral laughed at theſe falſe terrors and panics; ſo true it is, that the wiſeſt of us ſuffer ourſelves to be deceived by that which flatters our paſſions.

At length the prince of Bearn, who was now called King of Navarre from the death of his mother, arrived, with the prince of Conde, his couſin, who was pretty near the ſame age with himſelf. The ſeventeenth of Auguſt was fixed for the ceremony of his marriage with Margaret of France. The following days were to be ſpent in feaſts and pleaſures: all hatred ſeemed to be at an end; but the fire was concealed under the cinders. The admiral going home on foot to his hotel on the twenty-ſecond, about one o'clock in the morning, after having been

playing

playing with the king at tennis, was wounded by a ball from a hand-gun. 'Behold,' ſays he, 'the fruit of my re- 'conciliation with the duke of Guiſe.' This duke had actually ſworn to revenge the death of his father on him, whom he believed to be the author of it. Charles, at the news of the aſſaſſination, appeared tranſported with rage; he went to the admiral and promiſed him a ſtriking vengeance. Was this diſſimulation or ſincerity? we can only judge from his actions.

Meanwhile, the Proteſtants murmured, and highly threatened Catherine of Medicis, while the ſecret council of the monarch meditated the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew. The duke of Guiſe was charged with the execution, whom they would have ſtopped after he had wounded the admiral. Orders were given in a ſhort ſpace of time, without the ſecret tranſpiring. The night of the twenty-third or twenty-fourth of Auguſt began this frightful butchery. Coligny was one of the firſt victims: Guiſe, his mortal enemy had his door forced open; and Beſme, a domeſtic of the duke's, gave him the firſt ſtroke. 'Young man,' ſaid the admiral to him with a tranquil air, 'thou oweſt re- 'ſpect to my white locks; but do what 'thou wilt, thou canſt only abridge life a

'few days.' A number of lords and gentlemen were murdered in the Louvre; the Catholics filled Paris with carnage: several, to revenge their particular quarrels, murdered those of the same persuasion with themselves, whom their hate had transformed into Hugonots. Children, old men, pregnant women, all fell beneath the sword of the assassins. An artisan boasted, that he had himself killed four hundred people. The massacre lasted several days; and it well known, that Charles himself shot with a long gun after the unhappy people who took to flight. The corpse of Coligny, after being abusively treated by the populace, and hung on the gibbet of Montfaucon, was to him an agreeable spectacle. Somebody saying that he smelled offensively, 'The corpse of 'an enemy always smells well,' replied the king. A word borrowed from Vitellius, and equally odious in the mouth of either one or the other. It had been deliberated if the king of Navarre and the prince of Conde should be comprised in this massacre. The quality of princes of the blood saved their lives. Charles commanded them to renounce Calvinism. The first made some little resistance; the second appeared at first inflexible. 'Mass, Death, 'or the Bastile,' said the king one day to him in

in a rage. Fear decided his conſcience. Theſe forced converſions ſeldom laſt longer than the motive which produces them. Paris was not the only theatre of this tragedy: the order for maſſacring the Calviniſts having been ſent all over the kingdom, was executed in ſeveral places with the ſame fury. A celebrated hiſtorian reckons about ſixty thouſand Frenchmen who were murdered under pretence of religion. At this day the names of ſome governors of provinces who courageouſly refuſed to be the butchers of their citizens are bleſſed. A thing almoſt as ſtrange as the maſſacre is, that the king was not aſhamed of taking on himſelf all the odium. He declared in a bed of juſtice, that it had been done by his orders: he there expoſed his reaſons. The firſt preſident, Chriſtopher de Thou, praiſes his prudence, ſuppoſing a conſpiracy formed againſt the royal houſe.

The parliament blaſted the memory of Coligny, giving the remains of his corpſe to the hangman, and ordering, that there ſhould be a proceſſion every year to thank God for the deliverance of the kingdom. Their heated ſpirits had not as yet reflected on the atrociouſneſs of this barbarity. It was celebrated at Rome and

in Spain by pompous panegyrics, and in France by a medal, the inscription of which was, *Pietas armavit justitiam*, Piety armed by justice. Happily we know in our days, that piety can never be bloody, nor justice barbarous; and we are not afraid, by the example of a wise prelate, to paint the massacre of Bartholomew as an execrable action, which never had, nor we hope through the mercy of God, ever will have its likeness. Mr. Henault relates here a story well worth remarking: There were found in the papers of the admiral, advice to the king to take care in assigning the apenage of his brothers, not to give them too great authority. The queen-mother had this article read before the duke of Alençon, the youngest brother of Charles IX. who she knew was greatly afflicted at the death of Coligny. 'This 'was your good friend,' says she to him, 'only think of the counsel which he gave 'to the king:' 'I know not,' replied the duke, 'whether he had any strong 'affection for me or not; but this I know, 'that such counsel could never be given 'by a man who was not a faithful sub'ject to his majesty, and truly zealous for 'the state.' If this anecdote does some honour to admiral Coligny, nothing could better

better efface the notion of his being tainted with rebellion: a great man armed against the laws is always a ſcourge.

It is ſhocking to ſee a country torn to pieces by thoſe who ought to place their glory in its ſupport: but what a dreadful leſſon does Providence ſeem to give to the ambitious, in the perſons of all thoſe heads of party, ſo diſtinguiſhed by their rank or by their merit. They every one periſhed through violence. Francis of Guiſe, Lewis of Condé, and the admiral, were unworthily aſſaſſinated; the conſtable of Montmorency, the king of Navarre, Anthony of Bourbon, and the marſhal of St. Andrew, were killed in civil war. Every one of them endeavouring to overthrow government, tormented themſelves while living; and by the ſame means ſunk themſelves down to the tomb. The effect of St. Bartholomew was quite contrary to what they had hoped. Inſtead of extirpating Calviniſm, it rendered its partizans more furious. Experience has proved a hundred times, that religious zeal is irritated by bloody perſecutions; and that they give it ſtrength by reducing it to deſpair.

Charles IX. determined to take again into his own poſſeſſion thoſe places of ſafety which he had given to the Calviniſts. They refuſed to return them; proteſting,

that after the treachery which they had experienced when all ſeemed peace, they could not truſt to the court; and that they had rather periſh in defence of their religion and liberty, than by the hand of an executioner. Thus the maſſacre served no other purpoſe than to rekindle war. The duke of Anjou loſt near twenty-four thouſand men at the ſiege of Rochelle. This place ſupported itſelf under nine grand aſſaults, and an infinite number of ſmaller attacks. The women uſed their endeavours as much as the men to repulſe the aſſailants. The people of Rochelle at length obtained a capitulation which left them maſters of the place; in which was comprehended Niſmes and Montaubon. It was ſtipulated, that the king ſhould put in governors, but without a garriſon; the citizens having hitherto governed themſelves.

This memorable ſiege was leſs aſtoniſhing than that of the little city of Sancerre. Never, ſince the taking of Jeruſalem by the Romans, has ſuch a reſiſtance been known: the beſieged, deſtitute of all proviſions, eat every thing that was moſt diſguſtful among animals, and were at length reduced to eat the bones and fleſh of the dead, parchments, and ſome ſay, their own children. This was not done by ſoldiers, of whom they had very few; but citizens,

citizens, artisans, husbandmen, animated by an invincible fanaticism. They submitted, in a tolerable condition, after a long siege.

The reputation of the duke of Anjou, and the intrigues of Montluc, the bishop of Valencia, had made the former be elected king of Poland. Charles IX. extremely jealous of his brother, was ravished on this occasion, at having him at such a distance from him: the more he pressed his departure, the more the duke feared to quit France, where he hoped very soon to reign; nevertheless, he was obliged to go. The queen-mother, who had for him a particular affection, took the care of his interest upon herself: she always preserved her authority, whatever desire the king had to free himself from the yoke. The troubles of the state kept him still in dependence. The taste for faction was again renewed; they formed themselves afresh, under the name of Malcontents, or Politics, which put religion out of the question: they talked only of reforming the kingdom; and above all, of lowering the pride of the Guises, whose power had now scarcely any bounds. The duke of Alençon, the king's brother, of a turbulent mind, light and inconsiderate, put himself at the head of this cabal, which was

was excited by Montmorency; the Proteſtants entered into it. Thus, when t[illegible]e king of Navarre and the prin[illegible]de were much diſcontented with th[illegible] a plot for raiſing theſe princes was [illegible]diſcovered. A number of lords were impriſoned, and the king of Navarre and duke of Alençon arreſted. The fury of war was again beginning in the provinces, when the king died of a violent diſorder at twenty-four years of age, without male heirs, after having declared Catherine of Medicis regent, until the return of the king of Poland, his brother and ſucceſſor.

Charles IX. had eſtimable qualities, underſtanding, judgment, activity, and courage; and perhaps he would have been a great king if nature had not been depraved in him. The marſhal de Retz, a Florentine, abuſed his favour by corrupting him; and his mother inſpired him with that deteſtable policy which Machiavel had taught in Italy. Born with a violent temper, he had ſtill hardened the natural fierceneſs of his ſoul, by the cuſtom of hunting: deep diſſimulation, joined to the heighth of cruelty, made him capable of commanding the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew; nevertheleſs, it muſt be ſaid, he loved letters and cultivated poetry. Daurat, Ronſard, and Baif, were honoured by his good graces; and

he made his preceptor, Amiot, (the tranſlator of Plutarch) grand almoner, whoſe m[illegible]ps, would have been loſt in in[illegible] under another reign. He is not the fi[illegible]t example of a bloody prince who has had a taſte for literature. The fineneſs of the underſtanding does not change the bent of the heart; a thing much more ſingular is, that our beſt laws were enacted amidſt ſuch barbarities and diſorders: we are indebted for them to the chancellor of the hoſpital, who does honour to reaſon and juſtice, ſays Mr. Henault, by thinking them more ſtrong than armed men; and that they would have imprinted the knowledge of right in men's hearts, if they had known how to value it. The ordinances made by this great man are full of deep thinking; they would have eſtabliſhed peace and order in the moſt ſolid manner, if the rage of faction would have ſuffered itſelf to have been ſo happily bridled.

The year hitherto beginning on Eaſter-eve, a cuſtom ſubject to many inconveniencies, this being a moveable feaſt, the ordinance of Rouſillon in 1564 fixed the beginning of the year on the firſt of January. The parliament did not conſent to this reformation till 1567; ſo much does cuſtom ſometimes prevail over reaſon. In order to form an idea of the manners of the court,

court, which neceſſarily has an influence over the whole nation, we muſt unite together all kinds of diſorders [illegible] the greateſt exceſs; ſuperſtition, [illegible]ſm, wickedneſs and debauchery, treachery and cruelty. Catherine of Medicis had great faith in judicial aſtrology. Nothing was more common than witchcraft, by which they believed that they ſhould defeat their enemies. Unfortunately they joined to it a means more efficacious, I mean poiſon. All theſe plagues came principally from Italy. The reſtoration of letters, by refining men's minds, ſeemed to have diſcloſed theſe pernicious talents. Impiety on one ſide, and hereſy on the other, corrupted the happineſs of ſociety. The greateſt part of the people were ignorant of the true principles which ought to regulate the conduct of each particular, and the government of the ſtate. At the ſame time, the nobility were in general ſo ignorant, that they were obliged to ſend an expreſs for two gentlemen to converſe in Latin with the Poliſh ambaſſadors: nevertheleſs, Michael Montagne, a gentleman of Gaſcony, equally diſtinguiſhed for his wit and knowledge, peaceably cultivated philoſophy. The nervous ſtile and manly thoughts of his eſſays, are ſtill admired; a uſeful work for the knowledge of the hu-

man

man heart, but where religion and manners are not always ſufficiently reſpected.

U[illegible] reign ſomething happened in [illegible] which is worth taking notice of: admiral Coligny had ſent a colony to eſtabliſh itſelf in Florida; the Spaniards were not willing to have ſuch neighbours, as if they had excluſive rights over this immenſe hemiſphere: they ſurpriſed the French, and maſſacred them all, though there was no war at that time betwixt the two nations. The court of Madrid approved this cruel piece of injuſtice; that of Paris could not, or would not revenge it. A gentleman of Gaſcony, named Dominick Gourgues, undertook to do it without aſſiſtance: he ſold his eſtate in 1567; he equipped ſome ſhips, attacked the Spaniards, took from them their forts, and hung up thoſe Spaniards who fell into his hands; and finding a monument of their expedition, where they boaſt of having extirpated the inhabitants of the former colony, not as Frenchmen, but as Lutherans, Gourgues had the recital of his victory engraved on the ſame monument, where he ſaid, he had thus treated the Spaniards, not as Spaniards, but as traitors, robbers, and murderers. Far from being recompenſed at his return, he ran the riſk of his life. The Guiſes, managing

ging for Philip II. demanded a proſecution againſt him. Injuſtice was not ſuffered to be carried ſo very far. E[illegible] who knew better how to employ m[illegible]ered this brave captain the command of an Engliſh fleet. He was preparing for his departure when he died. Can we help obſerving how much theſe words, ‘ but as ‘ Lutherans,’ delineates the ſpirit of an age where religion was a pretence for the moſt monſtrous horrors !

HENRY III.

IT is aſtoniſhing, that Henry III. in his twenty-third year ſhould aſcend the throne, after two of his brothers, Francis II. and Charles IX. It is ſtill more ſo, that this prince, who had acquired a brilliant reputation when only duke of Anjou, ſhould render himſelf ſo deſpicable when he became king. Grief had devoured him in Poland ; impatient of returning to his country, and foreſeeing that the Poloneſe would put an obſtacle to his return, he fled from them at night, like a captive who breaks from his chains. The emperor, the Venetians, and the wiſeſt among the

French,

French, in vain adviſed him to endeavour to manage the Calviniſts, and once more eſt[illegible]neſs in a kingdom which had be[illegible]ated by factions and murders. He [illegible] once declared himſelf for vigour, as he had done at the time of the maſſacre; but it was not long before he had cauſe to repent it. The little city of Livron, which he endeavoured to take by force, reſiſted him with inſult. ‘ Approach, aſ-‘ ſaſſins,’ cried they from the top of the walls, ‘ you will not find us aſleep as you ‘ did the admiral.’ In the beginning of his reign, he ſhewed himſelf what he was, an enemy to buſineſs, giving himſelf ſeriouſly up to lightneſs and trifles, employing himſelf with ſome young lords his minions in the moſt infamous debauches, and increaſing the ſcandal of his manners by the grimace of devotion. What could one think of a king, who, covered with the moſt abominable vices, affected to go in proceſſion with a ſack over his ſhoulders, among the community of penitents, and to diſtinguiſh himſelf by thoſe practices ſo little known in France before his time.

The duke of Alençon, to whom he had given liberty, as well as to the king of Navarre, conſpired againſt his life. Henry pardoned him, being his brother. Afterwards, on ſome freſh ſuſpicions, he conjured

jured the king of Navarre to kill him, telling him, that he would, by this crime, become preſumptive heir to [illegible]h; but he was incapable of ſo bla[illegible]ed, and refuſed to lend a hand towa[illegible]s it. The common diſcontent united these two princes, though often quarrelling through a natural antipathy, and diſputes on intrigues of gallantry. The duke of Alençon fled from the court. The confederacy of the Politics and the Proteſtants acquired new force, by having the king's brother at their head. He was very ſoon followed by the king of Navarre, who, by the example of the prince of Conde, retracted the abjuration which had been forced from him under the late reign. The maſſacre of St. Bartholomew had not made any real good Catholics. The German troops had already come to the aſſiſtance of the confederates. The French found the neceſſity of making peace; and it was not now a time that they could do it with honour, ſo that they were obliged to make ſuch as the faction exacted from them. The greateſt advantages were gained to the Calviniſts by the pacific edict; entire liberty of conſcience, and public exerciſe of the pretended reformed religion (theſe were the terms of the edict). A court of juſtice was formed, where one half were Catholics, and the other Proteſtants,

Proteſtants, in the eight parliaments of the kingdom *. The memory of the admiral re[illegible]e chiefs of the confederacy, ac[illegible]ged for good and faithful ſubjects. The apenages of the duke of Alençon was increaſed, who, from that time, became duke of Anjou: and, to fill up the meaſure of their diſgrace, they bought the departure of the Germans, who had been given to them as hoſtages, and who were ſuffered with impunity to pillage the provinces as they retired to their own country. Theſe were the conſequences of St. Bartholomew, to which Henry III. had not a little contributed. Never did hereſy appear ſo triumphant, nor government ſo debaſed.

The indignation and zeal of the Catholics produced a ſtill more fatal evil: the

* From the time that the parliament had been fixed at Paris, and they had been convinced of the neceſſity of laws, and the advantage of tribunals to diſtribute juſtice, one parliament only could not take in every province; ſo that they afterwards ſucceſſively eſtabliſhed ſeveral others: that of Touloufe was created by Philip the Handſome, and many more by different kings. Their wiſdom ſometimes failed them in commotions; but their eſtabliſhment, as is obſerved by Loiſeau, ſaved the kingdom from being torn to pieces, and has maintained it entire. Laws are the firmeſt ramparts of a ſtate.

holy

holy league took birth, for so they stiled that dangerous confederacy, the pretended motive of which was, the defence of the church, the king, and the state; but whose principal design was, to overturn government, assassinate the king, and dishonour the church. The cardinal of Lorrain dying in 1574, was said to have given the rough draught of this plan; a work worthy of his excessive ambition. The Hugonots, animated by a republican spirit, had formed the like enterprises against sovereign authority. Those of the Catholics became in some degree a general revolt. In an article of association, which is recorded by an authentic author, it is said, that for common defence they proceeded, whether by the voice of justice or arms, without exception of any one person: the form of address to Picardy, or the league, took place; the substance of which was, that whoever should refuse to enter into it, should be reputed an enemy to God, a deserter of his religion, a rebel to his king, a traitor and betrayer of his country; should be abandoned by every body, and exposed to all the injuries and oppressions which could be offered him. Henry of Guise, sirnamed the Gashed, because of a wound he had received in the face, in fighting with the Calvinists, strongly animated the

cabal,

cabal, without as yet appearing at the head of it. It made a rapid progreſs; the [illegible]s were inſulted in ſeveral plac[illegible]e court, notwithſtanding the edict [illegible] pacification, could ſcarcely think of reſtraining theſe violences. Not being able to counterbalance one ſide againſt the other, they openly declared to the ſtates of Blois, againſt thoſe whom they hoped to find the eaſieſt overpowered, and revoked the edict which was granted to the Proteſtants. A ſmall matter was ſufficient to furniſh a new pretence for war: the king, by an inconceivable policy, authoriſed the league, declaring himſelf the chief; he took the head of a faction formed againſt himſelf. Such was the fruit of the ſtates of Blois; civil war, without the aſſiſtance of money to ſupport themſelves againſt it. They had ſcarce taken to arms before the king deſired a peace. A new edict of pacification confirmed the former one in ſeveral points; and new places of ſafety were allotted for the Calviniſts.

In this ſhort interval of tranquillity, Henry III. inſtituted the order of the Holy Ghoſt, that of St. Michael being fallen into ſuch diſgrace, that it was ſtiled the Collar of all Beaſts. The Catholics only could be admitted into this new order. It was a bait to draw in the Proteſtants; but

but the king, despised by the former, because of his scandalous conduct, and detested by the latter, as one of [illegible]s of the massacre of St. Bartholom[illegible]d fall upon no method of recalling the a[illegible]ctions of his people, and re-establishing his authority. He lavished every thing for his own luxury and that of his minions. He was in want of all that was necessary for the support of the state. Both parties saw in his person a weak debauched prince, and despicable hypocrite; and both sides braved him in their turns.

As the court was seldom faithful in its engagements, the king of Navarre thought no more of them; he renewed the war, and acquired great reputation at the siege of Cahors. On the other side, the duke of Anjou, (formerly the duke of Alençon) whose humour could not suit itself with that of Henry his brother, fled privately away, and endeavoured to make an advantage to himself of the troubles in the Low Countries, where the Spanish dominion daily declined. All the blood which had been spilt by the orders of Philip II. served only to inflame the people's hatred against him, and that of the Protestants against the church. The prince of Orange, whom he had proscribed, and whose head he had put up at a certain price, at length determined the states solemnly

lemnly to declare to him, that he had loſt the principality, having violated the privileges of the people, contrary to his oath: for this cauſe, added the proclamation, the ſtates, following the permiſſion which king Philip himſelf gave them when he was acknowledged prince of Flanders, and being free and diſengaged from the obedience which they then ſwore to him, chuſe for their prince, of their own will, from their own good judgment, Francis of Valois, duke of Alençon, brother to the king of France. The king approved the election; but notwithſtanding the genius and prudence of the duke of Anjou, he was not able to ſupport his authority. Diſſatisfied that the United Provinces put any reſtraint on him, and jealous of the prince of Orange, who had taken upon himſelf the place of abſolute maſter, he endeavoured to ravage the principal cities. This enterpriſe ruined his affairs; the citizens of Anvers repulſed the French, and made a great carnage. This unfortunate prince was obliged to return into France, having loſt, by his own fault, a ſtate where he might have been happy, had he ſhewn any reſpect for national liberty. He flattered himſelf with marrying the queen of England, from whom he had received a ring, as a pledge of her faith.

faith. It was the cuſtom of Elizabeth, to encourage the hope of princes who were deſirous of reigning with her. She cheat-ed the duke of Anjou as ſhe had many others; a prey to chagrin, he died in 1584. The prince of Orange having been aſſaſſinated by a fanatic, the new republic offered to acknowledge the king for ſovereign. An offer ſo advantageous was not accepted. Under a weak government, all opportunities are loſt without being made any uſe of.

It now appeared, that the holy league, coloured with an appearance of zeal, was in reality nothing more than a conſpiracy of the principal chiefs againſt the royal authority, and the fundamental laws of the kingdom. The death of the duke of Anjou diſcloſed the true deſign of thoſe who were engaged in it. The king of Navarre being now looked on as preſumptive heir to the crown, they affeﬅed more than ever to groan for the dangers of the church; for the certain triumphs of hereſy, in caſe an heretical prince ſhould ſucceed. Henry himſelf was not ſpared in their inveﬅives. The pecuniary ediﬅs with which he had loaded the people, his prodigality to unworthy favourites, his monſtrous debauches, his cabals, his frequent proceſſions, the ſack with which he covered

himſelf,

himſelf, his diſcipline, and the roſary which he wore at his girdle, furniſhed ample matter for ſatire. In order to make him the more ridiculous, they painted him as a favourer of hereſy, a ſecret friend of the king of Navarre, and a declared protector of the Genevans and religious Flemings. The greateſt part of the eccleſiaſtics and monks, tranſported by a blind zeal, blew up the fire of rebellion. They eaſily drew after them a credulous and eccleſiaſtic people. The duke of Guiſe ſet every ſpring to work with as much prudence as activity. A Jeſuit of Lorrain, named Matthews, was one of his principal agents; he was ſtiled the Courier of the League: Gregory XIII. whom he was commiſſioned to conſult with in a caſe of conſcience, whether the motive for ſupporting the Catholic religion was ſufficient to diſpenſe with the obedience due to the ſovereign, decided verbally, contrary to the ancient maxims of Rome, that war in this caſe was permitted againſt the king. The ſcruples of tender conſciences being lulled by this reply, they had nothing to do but with one voice to cry out for arms. The fanatic ambition of Henry of Guiſe aſpired to the throne; but he knew how to caſt a veil over his deſigns. He perſuaded

ſuaded the cardinal of Bourbon, uncle to the king of Navarre, that his nephew, being a heretic, was incapable of reigning; that he, therefore, ought to look on himſelf as heir to the crown. This old ſimple prelate eaſily imbibed the prejudices of dominion; he ſuffered himſelf to be dazzled by a chimerical hope, which not a little redoubled the ardour of his zeal. All on a ſudden, a manifeſto appeared, in which he was declared the chief of the league, expoſing the intentions of the leaguers. The names of the pope, of the emperor, of the king of Spain, and almoſt all the catholic ſovereigns, ſupported this declaration; which declared, That the whole confederacy had united in an oath of keeping a ſtrong and armed hand, until ſuch time as the church was re-eſtabliſhed in its dignity, the Catholic religion ſupported, the people ſatisfied, and the new taxes aboliſhed, &c. After this ſignal of war, the people of the league very ſoon took to the field: Henry, though in a condition to diſſolve them, was ſatisfied to make his apology; he invited the king of Navarre to change his religion, and to ſecond him in their common intereſt. The king replied, That he muſt firſt be convinced of the error of his own religion; that he was not obſtinate in that article; but

that

that he muſt wait the conviction of his conſcience.

The court had neither prudence nor courage. Catherine of Medicis, whether through affection for the league, or whether from a deſire of temporiſing, increaſed the terror of the king. They made at Nemours, a treaty of peace very advantageous to the leaguers, and very likely to make the Proteſtants rebel. They deſpoiled the latter of all that had been given them; they gave to the former all that rebels could wiſh for, in order entirely to deſtroy the royal power. The cardinal of Bourbon, and the princes of the houſe of Guiſe, obtained guards, cities of ſafety, money, and an authentic approbation of all that they had done againſt the ſtate.

Meanwhile the league loſt its credit at Rome. Sextus V. that fierce and enterpriſing pope, the ſon of a huſbandman, bred in a cloiſter, foreſeeing, through the force of pontifical artifice, the danger of this cabal, looked on them as undermining the religion of the kingdom. Though he ſpoke of them with contempt, he nevertheleſs furniſhed them with arms, publiſhing a famous bull, by which he excommunicated the king of Navarre and the

prince of Conde, as relapſed heretics, enemies of God and the church; calling them a baſtard generation, and deteſtable to the illuſtrious houſe of Bourbon; declaring them deprived of all their rights, incapable of ſucceeding to ſovereignty, and diſpenſing the ſubjects of the king of Navarre from their oath. The parliament, diſpleaſed at this attempt, made it matter of the ſtrongeſt remonſtrances: a counſellor was adviſed to burn this injurious bull. The two princes called together a free council. The king of Navarre, in his proteſtation, gave the lie to Sextus V. and added, That if the former kings and princes, his anceſtors, were capable of chaſtiſing the temerity of ſuch gallants as he the pretended pope Sextus, when they forgot their duty, and paſſed the bounds of their vocation, by confounding temporal and ſpiritual things together, he hoped that himſelf, who was nothing inferior to them, ſhould, through the mercy of God, be able to revenge the injury done to his king, to his houſe, to his blood, and to all the courts of parliament of France, &c. He had the courage to affix this placart in Rome itſelf. The pope admired his firmneſs: but the leaguers prevailed for the bull. It was their intereſt to appear to attack only the enemies of the church.

Their

Their cauſe thus became, in the eyes of the people, the cauſe of religion. Henry III. was forced to raiſe troops againſt the king of Navarre and the Calviniſts. War tore the provinces to pieces without producing any great event. They were in want of reſources; and the parliament rejected the pecuniary edicts, by which the exhauſted French had already been made too miſerable. Catherine of Medicis ſtill attempted negociation: ſhe had a conference at Saintonge with the king of Navarre; ſhe had taken with her ſome gallant women of the court; a means of ſeduction which had often ſucceeded with him. The prince ſeeing them, ſaid to the queen, 'There is nothing of this that 'will do.' 'What then,' replied ſhe, 'have I taken uſeleſs pains? I, whoſe 'ſole deſire is repoſe and quiet.' 'Madam,' replied the king, 'I have nothing to anſwer for on that account: it 'is not my fault that you do not ſleep 'quietly in bed; but you prevent me 'from ſleeping in mine. The trouble 'that you take pleaſes and nouriſhes you; 'repoſe is the greateſt enemy of your life.' The duke of Nevers repreſented to him, that he had not the power of raiſing a tax in Rochelle. He fiercely replied, 'I do

'at Rochelle all that I desire, because I 'desire to do nothing but what I ought.' This speech may give us a high idea of Henry IV. We shall thus develope him, until, according to the remark of M. de Voltaire, that name, so celebrated, is become his proper name. As he persisted in not abjuring Calvinism, purely from a motive of interest, a conference suspended hostilities for some time.

A frightful event increased the hatred of the Catholics against the religionists, and completed an unheard-of explanation of government. Mary Stuart, queen of Scots, after the death of her husband, Francis II. had retired to her own dominion. Elizabeth, who saw in her a dangerous rival, diligently fomented a rebellion among the Scotch protestants, more furious than any other, because they were more fanatic. The weaknesses of their queen, (for it is difficult, perhaps, fully to justify her from gallantry) when we weigh the testimonies for and against these foibles, might, it is probable, be a circumstance to irritate their fanatics, and make them drive her from her kingdom. In the year 1568, she sought an asylum with her enemy, Elizabeth, less generous than politic, kept her in prison ten years, and with an

an inexcusable cruelty, at last cut off her head, under pretence of insurrections which she had occasioned in the kingdom. It is certain, that the Catholics had formed some conspiracies against Elizabeth; but what right could the queen of England have over the life of the queen of Scots? This last met her death with a truly Christian heroism.

Henry III. could neither revenge his brother's widow, nor the rights of his royalty: he had every thing to fear for himself. There was a new faction sprung up at this time infinitely dangerous, called the League of Sixteen; thus named, because they who composed it, were distributed through the sixteen quarters of Paris. It existed two years, straitly united in a grand confederacy, and formed the design, not only of subjecting the king, but what was still more, of dethroning him. After having been advertised of this plot, he was neither more active nor more quicksighted. The leaders, whom he with reason looked on as his mortal enemies, obliged him to continue a war against the presumptive heir of the crown: he confided the command of the army to the duke of Joyeuse, one of his favourites, whose brilliant qualities gilded over the vices which he pos-

 sessed

ſeſſed in common with the court. This lord was defeated by Henry IV. at the battle of Coutras. The difference of the armies ſeemed to foretel the event of their conqueſt: the one, full of young nobility, brave and impetuous; but without diſcipline, ſoftened by luxury, covered with gilded armour and magnificent accoutrements: the other, compoſed of true warriors, ſimply clad, hardened by fatigue, and who thought of ſhining only by their exploits. Before the battle, Henry ſaid to the princes of Conde and Soiſſon, 'Remember that you are of the blood of 'Bourbon; and as God lives, I will ſhew 'you to-day, that I am your elder:' 'And 'we,' replied they, 'will make you confeſs that you have good juniors.' In leſs than an hour the victory was decided. Never had the king of Navarre ſhewn ſo much conduct, or ſo much valour; he diſtinguiſhed himſelf ſtill more by his moderation, taking care of the wounded, ſending back the priſoners without ranſom, and appearing as worthy of love as the league had repreſented him deſerving of hatred: he rendered funeral honours to the duke of Joyeuſe, who had been killed in cold blood after the battle. Theſe kind of murders, the crimes of fanaticiſm, diſ-

honoured

honoured each party in their turn. The duke of Guiſe, on the other ſide, ſignalized himſelf againſt the Germans, who came to the ſuccour of the Hugonots: their army conſiſted of eight thouſand Reîtres, and of five thouſand Lanſquenets, to whom they had joined ſixteen thouſand Swiſs. The German cavalry were called Reîtres, and the infantry Lanſquenets. This general, in the end, endeavoured to diſſipate them. The enthuſiaſm and inſolence of the leaders now redoubled; all Paris raiſed their idol to the clouds; the pulpits reſounded with his praiſes, and the preachers affected to lower the king, by crying up the duke. Theſe words, which they repeated with enthuſiaſm, 'Saul killed 'his thouſands, but David his ten thou- 'ſands,' became the univerſal voice of the populace; their minds were ſo ſtrangely faſcinated, that the Sorbonne decided, in a ſecret aſſembly, that it was in their power to take the government out of the hands of a prince whom they found not capable of governing, as they would the adminiſtration from a guardian whom they had reaſon to ſuſpect: a maxim dictated by the ſixteen, and which they pretended to put in practice. The death of the prince of Conde, poiſoned at St. John of

 Angeli,

Angeli, increased their confidence; their proceeding with impunity, was a proof how much they were to be feared.

Meanwhile, the duke of Guise constantly employed his mind on great designs. While the king remained buried in a stupid lethargy, the duke assembled at Nancie the chiefs of the league, and the princes of his house. They contrived among them to make new demands on Henry; they sent him a memorial, begging him to banish from court those suspected people, whom they should name to him; to publish the council of Trent; to re-establish the tribunal of the inquisition in the principal cities, and to commit the exercise of them to strangers rather than to Frenchmen, &c. These last demands filled up the measure of rebellion. The king dissembled, resolving to make an example of the sixteen. With this design, he assembled some troops, and sent an order to the duke of Guise, who was then at Soissons, forbidding him to return to Paris. He would have given twenty-five crowns to a courier to have carried this letter; but none was to be found, and it was sent by the post. At the moment that they were waiting the event, the duke of Guise arrived. He presented himself to the king, swearing

ing that he had received no orders to the contrary. Two days afterwards, Henry IV. entered with the Swiſs to ſecure the city. The ſeditious citizens took to arms, forming a barricade to the Louvre, ſurrounding, or diſarming the ſoldiers; the king fled, and abandoned his capital to the rebel duke, who would undoubtedly have ſeized on his perſon, if he had not apprehended making himſelf too odious by ſuch violence. The Pariſians adored him; Paris and the Baſtile were at his diſpoſal; and he had very ſoon re-eſtabliſhed order throughout. Achilles of Harlai, firſt preſident of the council, whom he viſited, more enraged than affrighted at his triumph, ſaid to him, 'It is great pity 'when the ſervant drives out the maſter: 'there remains nothing more for me than 'to give my ſoul to God, my heart to my 'king, and leave my body in the hands 'of the wicked, who may do with it 'whatſoever they will.' Thus this illuſtrious magiſtrate, by his fidelity and virtue, raiſed himſelf far ſuperior to the criminal hero.

The greateſt part of the members of parliament partook the ſentiments of their chief. There remained now ſcarcely any other reſource. The Pariſians very ſoon bluſhed

bluſhed at their exceſs, and ſent a deputation to the monarch, demanding pardon, and the parliament ſolicited mercy of the people. Henry at firſt behaved with ſufficient firmneſs; but he afterwards, according to cuſtom, granted to the rebels all they could wiſh. The edict of reunion, ſigned at Rouen, ſays, 'That the king ſwore 'to extirpate hereſy out of his kingdom, 'and never to make either peace or truce 'with the Heretics, nor paſs one edict in 'their favour; and that all his ſubjects 'ſhould ſwear, not to receive, after 'his death, as king, either an heretical 'prince, or favourer of the Heretics: that 'all places ſhould be given to Catholics: 'that his ſubjects ſhould break off all in'telligence, leagues, and aſſociations, ei'ther without doors or within: that a 'general pardon ſhould be paſſed; and in 'particular for the Day of the Barricades, 'ſuppoſing all was done through zeal for 'religion,' &c. the only article advantageous to the king. The ſurrender of the Baſtile was never executed; others, in ſome degree, delivered themſelves to the diſcretion of the factious. The more pliant government was in theſe ſtorms, the more the chiefs of party took advantage of circumſtances.

The

The prodigious armament of Philip II. to which they gave the name of Invincible Fleet, perhaps determined the court to yield in ſo ſhameful a manner. This fleet, compoſed of one hundred and fifty large veſſels, where the maſter of Peru had employed all his ſtrength, with a deſign of dethroning Elizabeth, ſeemed to threaten France as well as England; but it was beaten by the winds and by the Engliſh, in ſuch a manner, that the undertaking abſolutely produced nothing. The king, aſhamed of the abaſement to which he had been reduced by the leaguers, at length reſolved to make uſe of ſome authority. Thoſe who had adviſed him to mildneſs and reconciliation, loſt his confidence; the queen-mother in particular, who, indifferent to all parties, ſacrificed every thing to the ambition of governing. The States General were aſſembled at Blois; they made new demands, ſuch as were ſtill more aggravating; they inſiſted that he ſhould exclude the crown from the king of Navarre by name, who was already excluded, in quality of Heretic, by the treaty of Rouen: they propoſed anew the publication of the council of Trent; an infallible means by which the duke of Guiſe attached himſelf to the court of Rome. This propoſal excited violent diſputes

putes on the subject of the liberties of the Gallic church. Some Prelates dared to represent those liberties as chimeras invented against the authority of the Holy See; but the advocate-general of the court of judicature defended them in good French, as an ancient common right, which France had been happy enough to preserve.

The marquisate of Saluces being invaded, under pretence of zeal, by the duke of Savoy, who was believed to hold intelligence with Henry of Guise; the designs of this last mentioned prince, whose end evidently appeared to be dethroning the monarch; the insolence of the sixteen, who were all devoted to him, and who held the reins of dominion in the third state; resentment, choler, fear, all determined Henry to put to death the head of a party already grown so powerful, that he obscured, by his great qualities, almost all the princes of his time. "It was not a panic terror,' says Mr. Henault, 'but the fear of enter-'prises which he had formed. He found 'himself in like circumstances to those 'from which Pepin had profited. Henry 'III. was not unlike the last kings of the 'last race; and the pretence of religion 'had raised up popes of the same humour 'as Zachary.'

It

It appeared impoſſible, in ſuch circumcumſtances, to proſecute a duke, whoſe power in the kingdom was prodigious. An aſſaſſination was the moſt ſure way, and they gave themſelves little concern about its being the moſt odious. The king propoſed this office to the brave Crillon: Crillon replied, That he would undertake to kill this hero in ſingle combat; but that the office of an executioner was not at all ſuitable to him. The murderers were then choſen among the guards known by the name of the Forty-five. Henry diſtributing their poignards to them, ſaid, 'It is an act of juſtice that I command 'you to perform on the moſt criminal 'man in my kingdom: laws both human 'and divine permit me to puniſh him; 'but I cannot do it according to the common courſe of juſtice; I therefore autho'riſe you to do it, by the right of my 'royal power.' The duke of Guiſe received advice from ſeveral different places, that miſchief was plotting againſt him. A billet, which he found under his napkin at dinner, denounced his approaching cataſtrophe. He wrote on this billet with a pencil, 'They dare not;' and threw it under the table. His intrepidity was his ruin. The ſatellites wounded him even in the chamber with the king: they killed him

him with many wounds. The next day they aſſaſſinated the cardinal of Guiſe, his brother, a man as violent as the duke was careful and circumſpect in his ſteps. This famous author of the holy league, who had always religion in his mouth, was ſo little a Chriſtian in his manners, that he could ſcarcely diſſemble his libertiniſm; and was once carried ſo far, as to challenge the third brother of the duke of Mayenne to fight a duel, on account of jealouſy for his miſtreſs. After theſe two great men were aſſaſſinated, their corpſe were burnt, and their cinders ſcattered in the air, for fear that it ſhould be an object of fanaticiſm to the people; and that they ſhould render to their pretended relicts the ſame worſhip as they did to martyrs.

Inſtead of flying to Paris with his troops, and taking advantage of the firſt conſternation which the leaguers were thrown into, the king fell back into his general indolence: he took no meaſure, nor gave any one order to prevent ſeditions. Very ſoon all Paris was in a flame; the ſixteen abandoned themſelves to the laſt exceſs: their preachers changed Chriſtian morality into maxims of rebellion and vengeance: ſome of them exacted from their audience an oath to revenge the maſſacred princes. The Sorbonne declared the ſubjects of

France

France delivered from their obligations towards their ſovereign. Threeſcore and ten doctors ſigned this decree, and they gave it as the unanimous opinion of the body, though there were ſome opponents among the elders. Confeſſion ſerved to inſpire this crime, by making it be looked on as a means of abſolution by the greateſt part of the church. Some there were who had imbibed the ſentiments of rebellion.

When the miniſters of religion forget themſelves in this manner, others have no reſtraint. Buſſi le Clerc, a procurator, to whom the duke of Guiſe had confided the care of the Baſtile, as to the moſt furious of the ſixteen, ſhewed himſelf at the palace, followed by a troop of ſatellites. He preſented a requeſt to the parliament, conformable to the decree of the Sorbonne, that the ſubjects were free from their oath of fidelity. Not finding this company in the diſpoſition to grant what he exacted, he ordered the firſt preſident, and ſome others, to follow him. All the parliament roſe, following Achilles of Harlai; he forced them into the Baſtile, and formed a new parliament, compoſed of magiſtrates the leaſt ſuſpected by the leaguers. The requeſt of Buſſi le Clerc was paſſed, the league confirmed, and a reſolution taken by oath, to revenge the death of the duke and the cardinal of Guiſe,

Guiſe, againſt all thoſe who had been the authors or accomplices of that aſſaſſination. Againſt this multitude of attempts the king oppoſed nothing but manifeſtos and apologies. He loſt his mother Catherine of Medicis, who for fifty years had, by her ambitious genius and politic perfidy, fomented every faction which ſerved to ſupport her own authority. Though ſhe had always hated the king of Navarre, ſhe recommended it to her ſon, with her dying breath, to reconcile himſelf with him; and added, that he could no otherwiſe re-eſtabliſh peace in the kingdom, than by granting liberty of conſcience. The German princes, and ſeveral other ſovereigns of his age, having never been able by arms to pacify the troubles cauſed by religion, neceſſity gave weight to this double council, founded on palpable experience.

A new chief had filled up the place of the duke of Guiſe. It was the duke of Mayenne, leſs lively, leſs daring; but in all other things a worthy ſucceſſor of his brother. He had been at Lyons during the time that the ſtates were held at Blois. Henry III. having not ſecured his perſon by force, vainly endeavoured to gain it by negociations. We may well imagine, that the murder of his brothers excited his hatred, and authoriſed his refuſal. The leaguers

and

and their parliament (the king having transferred the parliament of Paris to Tours) declared him lieutenant-general of the crown of France. They made him king under another name ; for they ſuppoſed the throne vacant, and that they could not do better than fill it by him. A number of conſiderable cities ſtrongly embraced the ſide of the duke, and there remained only with the king ſome provinces held by the authority of the governors. In theſe fatal circumſtances, he at length treated with Henry IV, whom he had forced to be his enemy. This great prince, in ſpite of the terrors of his court, heſitated not to put himſelf into the hands of the monarch. It was a very hazardous ſtep, after ſo many examples of perfidy ; but the confidence of a hero, eſpecially excited by the public good, carried him above all perſonal conſiderations. The two kings tenderly embraced each other, and cloſely united againſt the league.

We ſhall paſs over all unneceſſary details ; nevertheleſs I cannot help taking notice of one particular circumſtance, which can never be too much imprinted in the memory of man. La Noue, a gentleman of Britanny, the glory of the Proteſtants, and even admired by the Catholics themſelves (ſo much does virtue gain the aſcendant over all hearts)

came readily to succour Senlis, which the army of the sixteen had taken. Ammunition was wanted there; it was all ready, but the traders refused to deliver it without money or some certain pledge. La Noue addressed himself to the farmers of the revenue, who had enriched themselves in the service of the king; but not one of them opened their purses. Full of indignation at their avaricious ingratitude, 'It is very well,' said he, 'I 'will myself then take upon me this ex'pence. Let him keep his money who 'esteems it more than his honour: while 'I have a drop of blood, or an inch of 'earth, I will employ them both for the 'defence of my country.' Immediately he engaged his estates to the tradesmen, flew to the succour of Senlis, defeated the leaguers, and saved the place.

The union of the two kings was a subject of alarm to the Romish court. Though Sextus V. had no regard for the league, he favoured it out of policy. The massacre of the duke of Guise had appeared to him an act of necessary justice; but that of a cardinal, and the imprisonment of some prelates, were crying attempts against the church and the Holy See. In vain the king demanded absolution, without having been anathematised. This

austere

auſtere pope, who had the ambition of governing ſovereigns, ſeeing him leagued with an heretical prince, fulminated againſt him monitory letters, by which he ordered him to ſet the cardinal of Bourbon at liberty, and cited him to appear before him in ſixty days, either in perſon or by proxy, declaring him excommunicated by virtue of the bull in Cæna Domini, if he did not inform the Holy See in an authentic manner of his obedience in the ſpace of thirty days. This bull in Cæna Domini, publiſhed in 1568 by Pius V. which had been always rejected in France and in ſome other ſtates, but had been conſtantly read in Rome on Holy Thurſday, was a principal object for the immunities of the church, and for excommunicating princes who exacted from eccleſiaſtics any contributions which they were unwilling to grant. The numerous excommunications which it made, were all reſerved for the pope. It paſſed that cenſure on ſome who were called to the future councils of his decrees or ſentences, and ſome who were ſubmitted to general council. All France was put under interdiction by virtue of this bull. One cannot conceive the uſe of renewing what had been ſo long diſuſed. But how much inconceivably does abuſe take root by cuſtom in all parts of the world!

the timid king was ſtruck with conſternation at the monitory from Rome; and Henry IV. had a great deal of trouble to encourage him: 'Let us vanquiſh,' ſaid he, "and 'we ſhall have abſolution; but if we are 'beaten, we ſhall be excommunicated 'with aggravations and reaggravations.' In effect, the cardinal of Joyeuſe had written from Rome, that they ſhould give or refuſe abſolution according to the fate of their arms. He beſieged Paris, and ſtifled the league by his ſtrength. An aid of ſixteen thouſand Swiſs, whom Sanci, maſter of the requeſts, obtained without money, by a prodigy of zeal and knowledge, put the royal army in a condition to form this enterpriſe. The king took St. Cloud on the twenty-ninth of July. It was there that fanaticiſm made its ſacrifice. A young Dominican prieſt, named James Clement, his head, heated by the declaration of the preachers, by the current doctrine of regicide, and by the daily diſcourſes of enthuſiaſts, thought himſelf inſpired to deliver the kingdom from a tyrant; for they gave no other name to Henry III. Bourgoin, his prior, confirmed him in his reſolution. There is reaſon to believe that people of the firſt rank had been the inſtigators of this deluſion; and the dutcheſs of Montpenſier,

ſiſter

ſiſter to the duke of Guiſe, was particularly ſuſpected. A number of paſſports and letters of credit, which Clement received from St. Cloud, were preſented by him to the king, under pretence of having eſſential things to ſay to him. In cold blood, like a villain, he plunged his dagger into his heart. Henry III. died the next day, in the arms of the king of Navarre, whom he called his brother and ſucceſſor. The race of Valois being extinct, the crown belonged to him as firſt prince of the blood. If the religious parricide had not been killed upon the ſpot, they would, without doubt, have forced from him ſtrange ſecrets. The tranſports of the Pariſians after this event appeared in the ſpirit of the league. James Clement was honoured as a ſaint. In the pulpits they compared him to Judith, who had cut off the head of Holofernes. They put up his image on the altars. The pope, on his account, expreſſed himſelf of the ſame way of thinking with the leaguers. Almoſt all the Catholic divines maintained this atrocious and abſurd doctrine, which excited murder, or even regicide, for the defence of the church.

Nothing better proves the ſpirit of party than the falſeneſs of that zeal which can extinguiſh not only the lights of reaſon, but

but even thoſe of religion. It muſt be confeſſed, that the conduct of Henry III. contributed not a little to inſpire this madneſs; ſuperſtition, joined to his other vices, rendered him equally deſpicable and odious. He is reproached with the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew; and the Catholics ſeem to be the revengers of the Proteſtants. This prince, by an ordinance of 1579 declared, that the Plebeians who bought fiefs of the nobles, ſhould not by that purchaſe be themſelves ennobled, nor take rank as ſuch: from whence the poſſeſſion of the fiefs were no longer able to ennoble thoſe that belonged to them. This abuſe introduced itſelf through the licence of government, and debaſed the nobility, by rendering it too common. It was likewiſe contrary to the prerogative of the ſovereign, who had the ſole right of conferring honour. Henry IV. in the ſame manner, ſuppreſſed that which was acquired by the profeſſion of arms. In order to be ennobled, it was neceſſary to procure letters from the king, or from an office to which this privilege was attached.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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ELEMENTS

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FROM THE

INVASION OF THE ROMANS

TO THE

REIGN OF GEORGE II.

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